



ANALYSIS
OF THE
FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL



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gentle reasons why God allowed ^{Israelites} Hophni & Phineas

use Ark at Ebenezer :-

I To punish them for not asking Him if they might take it.

II Their sin had become so great so that they no longer deserved the symbol of His presence.

III To show - heathen Philistines that His dominion extended everywhere; that He was Lord both of conquered & conqueror.

IV That He might show them how powerless their gods were

annah's Song:-

(a) Telling the results of her prayers -

(b) Telling the punishment upon Philistines

(c) Telling that Christ should be a King

Keeper of mine head - Keeper captain of my body guard

change of dynasty or dispute of
succession.

Jonathan arranged that arrows should be used in
case an interview was impossible.

Hishai = Joab's brother saved David's life in
of Philistine wars.

The reason why the men of Jabesh Gilead buried
the bodies of Saul & three sons was:-
They were afraid that the Philistines would
come & further insult it.

ANALYSIS
OF THE
FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL

WITH NOTES
CRITICAL, HISTORICAL, AND GEOGRAPHICAL;
ALSO
MAP AND EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

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CHIEFLY INTENDED FOR
CANDIDATES PREPARING FOR THE OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE LOCAL
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P R E F A C E.

IN studying Scripture History, a great difficulty is often experienced by young students, in not being able to have a simple and connected view of the whole narrative, before entering upon the minute details. Being aware of this, I have endeavoured in this little work to make the study of Scripture both interesting and thorough; and having taught Scripture History for many years, I must say that I have found it more beneficial to allow the pupil to have a general knowledge of the specified portion, before entering into details, such as explaining difficult passages, &c.; these will be grasped far better after thoroughly grounding our pupils in the general facts. Besides, the study in this way will not become tedious.

Therefore I have ventured to suggest a method of using this manual. And I hope that it will be useful not only to those preparing for the Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations, but also to Sunday-school teachers and others interested in Scripture study.

I shall be obliged to teachers and others for notifying to me any errors they may discover.

L. H.

HOW TO USE THE MANUAL.

I WOULD recommend teachers to make their pupils read the narrative portion of the Analysis first—viz., Part I. After this is done, to take the Bible and study the Book, chapter by chapter, with the aid of the notes and questions in Part II. The student will thus strengthen his knowledge of the subject in a gradual and easy manner. I have also found it a good practice for him to answer on paper,—preparatory to coming to class,—the questions set at the end of each chapter. This will ensure his thinking out the details of the lesson before coming to the class, which is, without doubt, of great advantage both to pupil and teacher.

The teacher will also find, that the questions at the end of each chapter have reference both to the Bible text and the notes on the chapter.

Of course some teachers might think it best to do Part II. first, and then allow the student to read Part I. Both ways have their merits, but I certainly prefer the one I have suggested, and hence the arrangement of the book.

January, 1885.

L. H.



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PART I.

THE TIMES OF SAMUEL AND SAUL.

SECTION I.

SAMUEL'S BIRTH AND CONSECRATION.

ELI'S DEATH.

1 SAM. i.-iv. B.C., circ. 1171—1141.

ELI, THE HIGH PRIEST AND JUDGE.—During the twenty years that Samson judged Israel, the high-priesthood was filled by Eli, but after Samson's lamentable death, he seems to have attached the duties of judge to those of High priest. **Eli was a descendant of Ithamar** the fourth and youngest son of Aaron, and as no mention is made before this of any High priest of the line of Ithamar, he is generally supposed to have been the **first** of that line, who **filled the priestly office**. Why the High-priesthood was transferred from the regular line of Eleazar to that of Ithamar, is not known. The **Tabernacle** with the Ark of God was at this time stationed **at Shiloh**, where a town had rapidly sprung up. Inside the gateway leading into the Tabernacle was a "**seat**" on which Eli used to sit and **survey the people**, when they came there to worship during the great Festivals.

ELI, BY MISTAKE, REBUKES HANNAH.—And among the most constant attendants at these festivals was the family of **Elkanah**, a man of **Ramathaim-zophim** in Mount

Samuel as child

*Alb
pp
and*

Ephraim. This Elkanah had two wives, **Hannah** and **Penninah**, the former being his favourite. By Penninah however, he had "sons and daughters," but by Hannah he had none, which circumstance to her was a source of great grief and sorrow; since it brought down upon her many taunts from her rival. On one occasion when at Shiloh, Hannah unable to bear the insults of Penninah, remained behind at the sanctuary to pray for a man child, vowing that if her request was granted, she would devote him as a Nazarite to the Lord's service all the days of his life. Whilst thus pouring forth her prayer unto the Lord, she was seen by Eli, who, ignorant of her feelings and seeing her mumbling something to herself, thought that she had partaken of too much wine; he therefore rebuked her and commanded her to depart and not pollute the sanctuary with her drunkenness. This to Hannah was adding insult to injury, but she was not to be daunted. She told Eli the cause of her grief, and the aged High priest being convinced of his error, immediately made amends by bestowing upon her his blessing, and expressing a hope that the God of Israel would grant her request.

SAMUEL'S BIRTH.—Before the appointed time for going up to Shiloh again came round, Hannah was the mother of a son, to whom she gave the name **Samuel** (*= asked or heard of God*)—a name that would always recall the circumstances connected with his birth. When he was weaned Hannah took him up to Shiloh, and having poured forth her thankfulness to the Lord in an inspired hymn, she presented the boy to Eli, as the child she had prayed for, and whom now she wished to be returned unto the Lord, according to the vow she had made, viz., that he should be a Nazarite all his days.

THE WICKEDNESS OF ELI'S SONS.—Eli who had now taken charge of this most remarkable child, had two sons of his own, **Hophni** and **Phinehas**, and they stand in a striking contrast with Samuel; the last, humble and innocent, whilst the two former are characterised as “**sons of Belial**” knowing not the Lord; by their lust and rapacity they had made Israel disgusted with them; so that men “abhorred the offerings of the Lord.” And Eli, old and infirm, restrained them not; and as years went on they got worse instead of better. This indeed was a dark period in the history of Israel, and the conduct of Hophni and Phinehas gives us but a glimpse of the degradation into which the chosen people of God had fallen. However, this state of things was not to last long.

ELI WARNED BY A MAN OF GOD.—The first warning to Eli of the coming downfall came from a “man of God,” a prophet. This prophet, whilst reminding **Eli** of the honour which God had conferred upon his family in choosing him as a **High priest**, though he was a **descendant of Ithamar**, rebuked him also for his leniency towards his sons,—honouring them even above their Maker. He also announced to Eli, that the **High-priesthood** would be **taken out from his family** and transferred to another and more faithful line, and that his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, would die on the same day.

ELI WARNED THE SECOND TIME BY SAMUEL.—The above-mentioned warning however, did not produce the desired effect. Therefore there was given to Eli another warning of the coming doom, not by any stranger this time, but by the very child whom Hannah had left at Shiloh “as a loan unto

the Lord," and who ministered before Eli, clad in a white linen ephod, and a little mantle which his mother brought him every year. So degraded was the priesthood at the time, that intimations of the Divine will were rare. There was not a man openly known to whom the Lord appeared in visions.

"And the Word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision."—1 Sam. iii., 1.

However, in the service of the Tabernacle there was one person who walked uprightly amidst all the impiety and wickedness of the age, and that was Samuel. In him God found a ready messenger.

One night, when Eli had gone to rest in one of the chambers near the Court of the Tabernacle, and which belonged to him as High priest, a voice called "Samuel." Samuel, on hearing it, and being in a room near to that of the High priest, naturally thought that Eli had called him. He immediately arose and went to enquire the cause. However, as Eli had not called him, Samuel was commanded to return and rest. But he had not rested long, before the same voice again pronounced his name. Once more he returned to Eli, who also in turn assured him that he had not spoken, and again bade Samuel go and rest. The Lord called him the third time, and he went at once to Eli as before. Eli now perceived that it was no common voice that called upon Samuel; he therefore commanded him, if he heard the voice again, to reply—

"Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."—1 Sam. iii., 9.

When Samuel again returned to his room, he heard the voice for the fourth time, and did as commanded by his guardian. And the Lord immediately made known to him the object of that mysterious calling:—

"The Lord was about to do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heard it should tingle. Hophni and Phinehas had made themselves vile, and Eli, their father, had not prevented them. Therefore, on account of this, God was about to bring Eli's house into judgment. and neither sacrifice nor offering could atone for their sins. Though it may be some time before God began thus to visit him, yet when He has once begun, He will not cease till He has made an end."—1 Sam. iii., 11-14.

These would be sad words for Eli, and it was with much tenacity that Samuel kept them to himself, until he was forced by Eli to make them known.

"I pray thee hide it not from me."—1 Sam. iii., 17.

As requested, he therefore told Eli every word of his message. Death awaited his sons, beggary and desolation his family. But notice the reply of the aged High priest, it is characteristic of all true and godly men :—

"It is the Lord : let Him do what seemeth good."—1 Sam. iii., 18.

And in the course of time, all that had been said was fulfilled. After this Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and suffered none of his words to fall to the ground, but exactly performed what he had foretold through Him. So that his fame as a prophet of the Lord, as a revealer of the Divine will, soon spread throughout the length and breadth of the land.

THE BATTLE OF APHEK.—THE ARK CAPTURED.—The day of retribution at last arrived, and Eli was to see in his own lifetime a part of the warning fulfilled. **The Philistines** who had now recovered from the blows inflicted upon them by Samson, renewed their assaults upon Israel. They **advanced** their forces to **Aphek**, not far from Jerusalem, and attacked the **Israelites** with success at **Ebenezer**, killing of them 4,000 men. Being very much alarmed at this reverse and as a last effort, the Israelites resolved to send to Shiloh for the Ark of God ; in order that they

might take it to battle, and thus save themselves from the hands of their enemies. As requested **the Ark** was removed from the Tabernacle at Shiloh, and taken to the battle-field at Ebenezer,—Hophni and Phinehas accompanying it. Its arrival in the camp so **gladdened** the hearts of the **Israelites** that

“They shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again.”—1 Sam. iv., 5.

The Philistines, when they came to know what had happened in the Israelitish camp, were very much alarmed ; and therefore resolved to put forth all their energies. Again battle was joined, and the Israelites this time sustained a more disastrous defeat than before—30,000 men were killed, amongst whom were Hophni and Phinehas, and—worse than all—the Ark of God was also taken.

ELI RECEIVES THE NEWS OF THE DEFEAT.—Among those who were saved from the Philistine foe, was a **man of Benjamin**. He managed to get as far as Shiloh on the very day of the battle. The state of his person and dress immediately showed to the inhabitants how the day had gone with the Israelites. His clothes were rent and his head was sprinkled with dust—the two Oriental signs of grief and dismay—and when seen by the people in this state a wail of lamentation arose. Eli, who was at this time sitting on a seat by the wayside near to the gate of the Tabernacle, and expecting some news from the battlefield, when he heard the noise, naturally inquired into the cause of it. The fugitive Benjamite was taken to him, and acquainted him of all that he had seen that day, saying :—

“I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to-day out of the army.”

Well, said Eli, let me hear what has happened. To which the Benjamite replied :—

"Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been a great slaughter among the people—and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead—and the Ark of God is taken."

This was most terrible news to the aged Eli, and, holding the Ark of God in such great reverence, he had no sooner heard the last part of the news than he fell backwards from his seat, broke his neck and died. He was ninety-eight years of age, and had judged Israel forty years.

But even now we have not reached the climax of this dreadful day. There was yet another death to be recorded before the catastrophe was completed. It happened at this time, that the **wife of Phinehas** was about to be delivered of her second child. When she heard what had happened on the battle-field to her husband and the Ark of God, also at home to her father-in-law, the pangs of childbirth came upon her; a son was born, and the women that stood by her failed to cheer her drooping spirits. Being a pious woman, she was naturally as much concerned with the fate of the Ark as with that of her husband. In her pains and sorrows all that her mind could realise was that the Ark of God was taken. The shock was too much for her to bear; she sank under it, and when about to die she named the child **Ichabod**; for said she, "**The glory is departed from Israel.**" And truly so it was; for the Ark, the sign of God's presence, was taken away from Israel.

SECTION II.

THE TRANSITION FROM THEOCRACY TO A MONARCHY.—SAMUEL'S JUDGESHIP.

1 SAM. v.-viii. B.C., circ. 1141—1095.

THE ARK AMONGST THE PHILISTINES.—"**The ark of God is taken.**" These words fully express the view taken

by the people of the disasters which had overcome them. At Shiloh they witnessed the hand of God heavy upon the house of Eli. On the road between Ebenezer and Ashdod the Philistines were triumphant over the capture of the Ark, which to them would seem as if they had captured the God of Israel Himself. And for a long time would the incident be remembered both among the Philistines and the Israelites. **From Ebenezer** the Ark was taken **to Ashdod** one of the five principal cities of the Philistines, and it was placed in the temple of Dagon, their god, with the object of showing the superiority of their own idol god over the God of Israel. But their hopes were not realised. For on the morrow after putting the Ark in the temple they found **Dagon lying on its face** upon the ground. And when set up again by the priests, it met a similar fate during the coming night. For the next morning they found it **not only fallen, but without head or hands**. Only the stump of Dagon was left to him. And as an additional proof of His power, God sent a plague of mice amongst the people of Ashdod, and tormented their bodies with emerods (*i.e.*, piles). And such strange visitations were naturally attributed to the presence of the Ark amongst them; for even before its capture, the sacred symbol of Divine Presence was looked upon by the Philistines with awe. The Ashdodites decided to have it **removed to Gath**; but here, too, soon after its arrival the same plague broke out. Reluctant, however, to believe that there was anything but chance in these visitations, and unwilling to lose the Ark, the people of Gath forwarded it to Ekron.

But the Ekronites would not have it; for they believed that its presence had something to do with the misfortunes

of the people of Ashdod and Gath. This unwillingness on the part of the Ekronites brought about a consultation of the Philistine priests and diviners to determine what should be done with it. And it was at last **decided** that it **should be sent home**, placed in a new cart, and to be drawn by **two young cows** which had never been yoked. With it they were to send as a trespass offering five golden mice and five golden emerods. Accordingly, the Ark, together with the trespass offering, was placed on the cart, and the lords of the Philistines followed behind to witness the procession and bring back news of what had happened. The cows at once took the highway between Ekron and Bethshemesh. And it was harvest time; for the Bethshemites were in the fields, busy gathering in their corn, when they beheld the procession winding through the plain and approaching them:—

“They lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it.”—
1 Sam. vi., 13.

Especially after an **absence of seven months**. The procession did not stop till it arrived at the **field of Joshua**, a Bethshemite, where there was a **great stone**, on which the cart and the cows were sacrificed, and would therefore serve as a **memorial of this event**. After witnessing the ceremony, the five lords of the Philistines returned homewards, marvelling no doubt at the wonderful events they had seen.

THE ARK RESTORED.—Even this restoration of the Ark was clouded with calamities such as we seldom meet in history. The **Bethshemites** not content with having it once more amongst them, were bold enough to lift up the cover and **look inside**, though it was **unlawful** for any person but the priest to **look upon it** bare and uncovered

(Num. iv., 20), even the Levites who carried it were forbidden to do so. For this profanity, a considerable number of the Bethshemites met with instant death. Loud were the lamentations which followed, and the whole place was struck with terror of the Great God, saying :—

“Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? and to whom shall he go up from us?”—1 Sam. vi., 20.

Messengers were therefore despatched to **Kirjath-jearim**, to inquire whether they would take charge of the Ark. Without much hesitation, these consented. They even fetched it themselves. When it arrived at Kirjath-jearim, it was placed in a little **sanctuary** of its own **in the house of Abinadab**; and here **Eleazar** the son of Abinadab, was consecrated **priest to look after it**. And there it remained until the time of David (2 Sam. vi., 7). At first it may seem strange that the Ark was not taken back to the Tabernacle at Shiloh, but that is soon removed, if we only think of the reason why the Lord permitted it to be taken away from that sanctuary and fall into the hands of the Philistines. Though it had remained at Shiloh since the Conquest, it never returned there again.

THE OVERTHROW OF SHILOH.—The account of what happened to this place after the departure of the Ark is very imperfect. Here and there we have a casual reference to it. Doubtless it suffered gradual decay, otherwise we should have details of the overthrow. The Tabernacle, we find, was removed to Nob, and from there to Gibeon. And the name “**Shiloh**” soon became a proverb for destruction and desolation. [Notice the references to it in subsequent history.]

“I will do to this house . . . as I have done to Shiloh.”—Jer. vii., 14.

“Go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh . . . and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel.”—Jer. vii., 12.

"I will make this house like Shiloh . . . a curse to all the nations of the earth."—Jer. xxvi., 6.

In a little time, the place which had been the very metropolis of Canaan had become so obscure that it had to be specified carefully, before one could understand where it was. It is described as—

"Shiloh . . . which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah."—Judges xxi., 19.

Thus ended the period that the House of God was at Shiloh ; thus ended the supremacy of Ephraim, whose fate is so well described in the words of the Psalmist :—

"He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he had placed among men.

"He refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim."—Ps. lxxviii., 60, 67.

Thus in the **overthrow** of the first sanctuary at **Shiloh** by the Philistines, **ended** the **first period** of Jewish History, which had lasted from Moses to Eli ; similarly the **second** period ended in the **overthrow of the Temple** by the armies of Babylon ; and the **third** in the total destruction of the **last temple** of Jerusalem by the Roman armies. This first period has been characterised as a time of wandering and of strife, of danger and of deliverance, of direct dependence upon God, with no regular form of government, or law, or army, or king, to ward off the enemies that were always ready to attack them from without, or to suppress disturbances from within. Leaders of the people were raised up as circumstances required, and these again were under the direct guidance of God. Therefore this period has been **styled** "**the Theocracy.**" Theocracy therefore, ended almost with the overthrow of Shiloh, and monarchy, government by kings, was soon introduced.

SAMUEL AT MIZPEH.—In the overthrow of Shiloh, and the disasters which followed, no mention is made of Samuel. His **next appearance**—after an interval of many years—is at **Mizpeh**, warning the people against their idolatrous practices. Here he appears almost in a threefold character—**prophet, judge, and leader of the people.** It was at his own request that the people had assembled, and the object of such a solemn gathering was to renew God's acquaintance, which they had so shamefully forfeited, and to ask forgiveness and mercy for their past conduct. And as a sign of their deep humiliation they poured water on the ground, fasted, and confessed their sins.

BATTLE OF EBENEZER.—From this very day **Samuel's career as judge began**, and the commencement of his rule was inaugurated by a most signal victory over the Philistines, who, afraid that this gathering meant an attack upon them, at once joined battle with the Israelites. The onslaught was made just when Samuel was offering up sacrifice and praying on behalf of the people, who had become alarmed as soon as they heard of the intended attack from the Philistine foe. As in the case of Moses when hotly pursued by the Egyptians (Exod. xix, 19), God soon came to the rescue, and sent assistance in the form of **thunder and earthquake.** This at once threw the **Philistines** into a great panic, and they **fled** in great disorder—being pursued by the Israelites as far as **Bethcar.** And thus on the very spot, where twenty years ago, the Philistines had won a great victory, they are now totally routed. To commemorate the event, Samuel sets up a stone at the place, and calls it **Ebenezer, the Stone of Help.** Through this victory the Israelites were enabled to recover a

large portion of their lost territory in the plains of Philistia. Though this was Samuel's first and only direct interference in military affairs, yet it was sufficient to confirm him in his office as judge. He was by nature a man of peace.

SAMUEL AS JUDGE.—During his judgeship, Samuel resided chiefly at **Ramah**, his birth-place, which, like Gideon and Micah did theirs, he converted into a sanctuary of his own. But he forgot not to visit from year to year the three chief sanctuaries on the west of Jordan—Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpeh—administering justice and giving advice wherever it was necessary. But

“His return was to Ramah; for there was his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built an altar unto the Lord.”—1 Sam. vii., 17.

However, after a time the duties of judge were more than he could manage. So like Abdon and Jair, he also allowed his sons—Abiah and Joel—to share with him the judicial functions. These resided at Beersheba on the very southern frontier of Palestine. And like Hophni and Phinehas, sons of Eli—they also did not walk in the ways of their father. So that he who when a child, had denounced such a terrible judgment on the house of Eli, lived to see his own sons turn aside after lucre, extorting exorbitant interest on loans and perverting judgment.

Up to this point there is nothing much to distinguish Samuel's career from that of his predecessors. He was a judge, a Nazarite, and a warrior. So also was Samson. But what makes him rank higher than all the other judges is, that he was the inaugurator of a new system of government. However, there is another character under which we must consider him. Though the last, yet not the least of the judges, he was the first of the prophets.

Samuel a Prophet

SAMUEL AS A PROPHET.—Samuel is distinctly so styled even in the New Testament :—

“All the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after.”—Acts iii., 24.

“After that he gave unto them judges . . . until Samuel the prophet.”—Acts xiii., 20.

He was also looked upon as such in his own times :—

“Samuel the seer.”—1 Chron. ix., 22 ; xxvi., 28.

He was consulted from far and near on the ordinary matters of life ; loaves of bread or the fourth part of a shekel of silver were paid for the answers (1 Sam. ix., 7, 8).

It is as a prophet that he stands pre-eminent, with the exception of Moses, amongst Scripture patriots ; as a reformer he stands alone. He was, as it were, a link between two diverging periods, the theocratical and monarchical, with a sympathy perhaps for each. In him also the prophetic order rose into prominence, and became destined to play an important part in Jewish history for the next seven centuries. It was also in his time that we first heard of the schools of the prophets, from which arose such men as Saul, David, Gad, and Nathan.

THE SCHOOLS OF THE PROPHETS.—One of these schools was established in **Samuel's own lifetime** at **Ramah**. Others were afterwards established at Bethel (2 Kings ii., 3), Jericho (2 Kings ii., 5), Gilgal (2 Kings iv., 38), and elsewhere. Their constitution and object were similar to those of our own theological colleges. Into these, promising youths were gathered together, and here they were trained for the office they were afterwards to fill. A leading prophet of the day was placed in charge of them, whom they called their **father**, and the students would be called his **sons**. A part of their curriculum consisted in studying the law of Moses, composing sacred poetry, and preserving and copying historical records. And so successful were these institutions

that from the time of Samuel to the closing of the history of the Old Testament, there seems never to have been wanting a due supply of men to keep up the line of **official prophets**.

THE DESIRE FOR A KING.—This desire of change in their government displeased Samuel very much. It was a formal rejection of God's government. However repugnant it might have been to Samuel, still the cause of this desire of change was the misconduct of his own sons.

"Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king to judge us like the nations."—1 Sam. viii., 5.

Another reason given for this desire is, that the Ammonites beyond the Jordan threatened the cities of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh (1 Sam. xii., 12); and the Israelites had no known military commander to lead them to battle against these enemies. Samuel himself was a man of peace and well stricken in years, and therefore could not undertake the duties. One military success, and one only, had marked his judgeship. Though well aware of all this, still the request gave Samuel a shock, and he was very much displeased. They desired a king such as the nations around them had. And Samuel knew well the abuses attached to such a system of government. However, he would not deal rashly in the matter; as was his custom, he goes to God for direction in it. God tells him, though it showed a want of confidence in Himself, still he was to grant the nation's request; and he was also to describe to them carefully the system of government to be expected under such a king—as if in hopes they might alter their opinions. Accordingly an assembly of the people was called together, and Samuel faithfully carried out God's instructions. But all his warnings against the

evils attending a despotic government fell on unheeding ears. The pomp of a court had too many attractions for them. They wanted also a visible king to lead them forth to battle; without such an one they felt degraded in the eyes of the surrounding nations. Samuel again carried back to the Lord what he had heard the people say, and God commanded him to listen to their voice, and also promised that their wishes should be met.

SECTION III.

SAUL ELECTED AS THE FIRST KING OF ISRAEL.

1 Sam. ix.-xii. B.C., circ. 1095.

GENERAL REMARKS.—From their leaving Egypt to the present time, **the Israelites** had been **under** the direct government of God, which system of government has been termed **a Theocracy**. They are now about to enter upon a new and different kind of government, a system such as the nations around them had. They are about to have a King, and this important personage is to be no other than the shy and diffident **Saul**. Therefore, in Saul we feel that a distinct advance has been made in Jewish history. As Samuel was the principal figure of the transitional period discussed in the last section, so Saul is of the monarchical period which is about to commence. In reality, Saul is but a product of the transitional period, the two periods, as it were, joining hands in him.

So minutely can the Biblical student trace every detail in connection with Saul's history, that it is almost impossible not to feel interested in him. At one time, he is the admiration of his countrymen, at another he is the wayward, fierce,

and jealous monarch. Yet with all his faults, he has redeeming qualities. His jealousy is often mingled with affection. Notice the case of David. Dean Stanley, referring to the position he holds in Jewish history, gives the following description of Saul:—

“He is the eddy in which both streams converge. In that vortex he struggles—the centre of events and persons greater than himself; and in that struggle he is borne down and lost.”

SAUL'S PARENTAGE.—He was the **son of Kish**, of the household of Abiel, of the tribe of Benjamin. Where the original seat of the family was, is a matter of doubt. It may have been **Gibeah**, called from Saul's subsequent connection with it, Gibeah of Saul. But more **probably** it was the village of **Zelah**, the place of Kish's sepulchre (2 Sam. xxi.).

Although the family—as Saul himself confesses—was of little importance, still Kish, the son or grandson of Abiel, was regarded as a powerful and wealthy chief.

“Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, . . . a mighty man of power.”—1 Sam. ix., 1.

And it is in connection with some of his father's lost property that Saul first comes before us in Scripture history.

SAUL ANOINTED KING.—A drove of asses, some of Kish's property, had gone astray on the mountains. At his father's bidding, Saul—accompanied by **a servant, supposed to be Doeg, the Edomite**—goes in search of them. After three days' hard and useless search, they arrived at the foot of a hill, on which a town was situated (1 Sam. ix., 11-13)—supposed to be Ramah. Here Saul proposed that they should return home, but his servant suggested that before doing so, they should **consult Samuel**, who had by this

time become noted throughout the land. This was agreed to. And on their way to Ramah, they met with certain maidens, who informed them that Samuel had just come to the city to a **sacrificial feast**, and on entering the city they met him on his way to the sacred eminence where the feast was held. As Saul and Samuel approached each other, the Divine voice assured the latter that he was then confronted by the **destined King of Israel**. We must remember that Saul little knew that he, whom he saw coming out of the city, was the famous prophet. For he asks of him :

"Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is."—1 Sam. ix., 18.

To which Samuel answered :—

"I am the seer."—1 Sam. ix., 19.

At once the prophet invited Saul to the feast, where in anticipation of some distinguished stranger, he had already ordered the cook to reserve a boiled shoulder, from which Saul as chief guest, was to tear off the first morsel. Samuel also uttered some mysterious words to him.

"And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house."—1 Sam. ix., 20.

The feast being over, Saul spent the evening with Samuel at Ramah. In the morning both descended to the outskirts of the town, and there—the servant having left them—Samuel poured oil over Saul's head, and with a kiss of salutation, announced him as the ruler and deliverer of the nation. From that very moment Saul was to commence a new period of his life. And as a proof of the reality of the proceedings, the prophet mentioned three incidents that would come to pass on his homeward journey :—

(i.) By the sepulchre of his mighty ancestors—known then as also now as Rachel's tomb—he would meet two men who would inform him of the recovery of the asses, and that his father's anxieties now centred upon him.

(ii.) At the "plain," or rather "the oak of Tabor," he would meet three men, carrying gifts of kids, bread, and a flask of wine, as gifts to Bethel. These would salute him, and offer him two loaves of bread, which he was to receive.

(iii.) By "the hill of God"—whatever may be the precise spot—he would meet a company of prophets descending with musical instruments. Their inspired strains would so affect him that he would even join them, and be turned to another man.

After the fulfilment of these three signs, he was to **proceed to Gilgal**, and tarry there until Samuel came. He would then get to know more of his future career.

Having thus listened with astonishment to what the prophet said, Saul and his servant now proceeded homewards, and on their way they witnessed the fulfilment of the three signs. And on his arrival, as was natural, many were the inquiries of what he had been doing, his uncle even going so far as to ask what Samuel had told him; but Saul only answered that the prophet had set at rest their anxiety with regard to the asses.

"But of the matter of the kingdom whereof Samuel spake, he told him not."—1 Sam. x., 16.

This is what may be called the private or inner view of Saul's call to be king. There is yet a public or outer call which we must consider.

THE PEOPLE ASSEMBLE AT MIZPEH.—In order, therefore, that there should be a public selection, Samuel summoned the people to assemble at **Mizpeh**. Here he rebukes them for their want of faith in God, in thus seeking a king. And as it was now settled that they should have one, he also asked them to choose by lot—so often practised at that time—who should reign over them. The lot fell to the tribe of **Benjamin**, the family of **Matri**, and to the person of **Saul**. But when search was made for Saul, he could not be found. He had hidden himself in the circle of baggage which surrounded the

encampment at Mizpeh ; thus showing his unwillingness to undertake the arduous duties of the kingdom. When brought forth from his concealment, his tall and handsome person at once conciliated the public feeling, insomuch that they shouted, "**Long live the King,**" a shout which has often been repeated in modern times.

The ceremony finished, the people returned to their homes, and Saul again retired to Gibeah, to look after his father's farm and cattle.

SAUL'S FITNESS FOR THE OFFICE.—Up to this point, we must have been impressed with Saul's shyness and timidity ; he displays but little self-confidence, neither is he trusted much to his own devices. His father deemed him as unequal to the task of finding the asses without a servant to assist and advise him. At every step of Samuel's revelation to him, he is taken with surprise.

"Wherefore, then, speakest thou so to me."—1 Sam. ix., 21.

When he was among the prophets, his acquaintances could hardly believe it to be true. When his uncle enquired of him the result of his interview with Samuel, he kept back the most important part. When publicly elected as the leader of the nation at Mizpeh, he went and hid himself ; and many, on account of this strange behaviour, deemed him as unfit for the duty, saying :—

"How shall this man save us ?"—1 Sam. x., 27.

After all the greeting from his countrymen at Mizpeh, he calmly returns to Gibeah, to work in the fields ; and though all this is true of him, still there are other special gifts which mark him as duly fit for the office of king :—

"The desire of all Israel was upon him.' He was a choice young man and goodly ; there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he. There was none like him among all the people. He was even the chosen of the Lord."—1 Sam. ix., 2-20 ; x., 24.

THE RELIEF OF JABESH-GILEAD.—When living in retirement at Gibeah, and not very long after the assembly at Mizpeh, Saul, however, received news which at once stimulated him to action. The Ammonites under their king Nahash—having again recovered from the severe blow inflicted upon them by Jephthah—had laid siege to **Jabesh-gilead**. And the inhabitants of this town had got so terrified, that they agreed to make a treaty with Nahash, and to serve him. But the Ammonite king would not accept this, unless they also agreed **to put out their right eyes**, so as to make them unfit for military service. In this trouble, the chief men of the town asked that they should have seven days to think the matter over; and during this interval they **sent to** their brethren on the **west** of the river Jordan **to ask for aid**. When the news arrived at **Gibeah** of what was happening at Jabesh, a loud wail of lamentation came from the inhabitants. And Saul, as he was driving the oxen home in the evening, hearing it, enquired into the cause. The people told him the message. And the spirit of the Lord came upon Saul as upon Samson. He was at once ready for the emergency. He was no longer shy or timid. He was so roused to anger, that he took some oxen from the herd he was driving, hewed them to pieces, and sent their bones throughout the country, with a most significant warning:—

“Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen.”—1 Sam. xi., 7.

His determined spirit was soon communicated to the people. They rose as one man. Upwards of **300,000 from Israel, 30,000 from Judah, answered his call**; and they assembled at **Bezek**, a place within a day's march from Jabesh. Here Saul divided his forces into three companies. And after a swift night's march, they suddenly came upon

the Ammonites in the morning watch, and inflicted such a decisive blow upon them,

“That two of them were not left together.”—1 Sam. xi, 11.

The effect of this great victory upon the people was almost instantaneous; insomuch that Samuel thought it a suitable opportunity for the people to renew their confidence in Saul. In order that this might be done, he summoned the people to **Gilgal**. The prophet also took the opportunity of bidding a kind of farewell to the people whom he had ruled so judiciously for such a length of time.

SAMUEL'S FAREWELL.—Being well aware of the manner the people had been ruled, both in his time and that of Eli, Samuel asked them whether they had any charge of fraud, or oppression, or unfaithfulness **to bring against him**. With one voice the people answered that he had always been **sincere and upright in his public life**. Being so assured, like Moses and Joshua, he advises the people to cleave fast unto the Lord who had been so good to them in times past. And as a proof of the sincerity of his advice, he asks an outward and visible sign from heaven. **The Lord answered him by thunder and rain**, which at that time of the year—being **wheat-harvest**—was a most unusual occurrence. And having thus bidden farewell to the people, he leaves the government in the hands of Saul alone. He will again but seldom appear before us in a public capacity. Nevertheless, he loses none of his importance as an adviser and reprover. For says he:—

“God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and right way.”—1 Sam. xii., 23.

“If ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.”—1 Sam. xii., 25.

SECTION IV.

JONATHAN AND THE PHILISTINE WAR. BATTLE OF MICHMASH.

1 SAM. xiii., xiv. B.C., circ. 1093-1087.

JONATHAN.—Jonathan was the eldest son of Saul. We know absolutely nothing of his early years. When he first appears in sacred history he is a man of note in Israel, and about thirty years of age. His generous and brave character have placed him **amongst the most distinguished of the Old Testament heroes**. Like Saul, his father, he also was a man of great strength and activity (2 Sam. i., 23). In archery and slinging he was unsurpassed, the bow being to him what the spear was to his father.

“The bow of Jonathan turned not back.”—2 Sam. i., 22.

We may divide his life into two main divisions—

- (i.) His connection with the Philistine War.
- (ii.) His friendship with David, the second King of Israel.

The latter we must reserve till some future section, as at present we are only concerned with the former.

JONATHAN'S FIRST EXPLOIT.—The Philistines having recovered from their defeat at the second battle of Ebenezer, determined to revenge themselves again upon the Israelites. And in the second year of Saul's reign we find them even in possession of Geba, and sanctuaries of Dagon, their fish god, are found even to the verge of the Jordan valley. However, Saul at last realised the responsibility placed upon him, and resolved to throw off a yoke that was so oppressive to his fellow-countrymen. He called together an army of 3,000 men, and placed 1,000 of them under the

command of Jonathan. The remaining 2,000 he took charge of himself. Whilst Saul pitched his camp at Michmash, Jonathan pitched his at Gibeah of Benjamin, where a Philistine garrison was stationed. In a fit of youthful daring, he resolved upon attacking this garrison, and success attended his efforts. This naturally enraged the Philistines, and they immediately gave the signal for a general attack upon Israel. Without delay, they swarm through the passes of Benjamin, and the Israelites were terror-stricken. Michmash at once fell into their hands, and Saul with his followers retired to Gilgal, there to await Samuel, to whom he sends a message that he wanted to know the divine will with regard to his future course. Samuel replied that he would be with him within seven days, to celebrate a solemn sacrifice.

SAUL'S FIRST ERROR.—These seven days would be very anxious ones for Saul. Daily he would be expecting the arrival of the great prophet. The days passed away, but no Samuel came. The Philistines also were increasing in numbers, and therefore in strength. Saul's followers were gradually leaving him, till at last he had only 600. Samuel's delay and the Philistine encroachment made him so impatient that he resolved at last to offer sacrifice himself. He had scarcely finished when Samuel arrived, and sternly rebuked him for his impatience.

"And Samuel said unto Saul, Thou hast done foolishly : thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee : for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue : the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee."—(1 Sam. xiii., 13-14).

Those would be solemn words to him who had showed such want of faith in God. Why could not He, that enabled

Gideon to conquer even more numerous enemies with 300 men, enable him now to do so with 600 ?

ISRAEL'S DISTRESS.—The **lowest depression**—before the captivity at Babylon—which the Israelites ever reached, was the disastrous period during the **first struggles of the Monarchy**. The Philistines had now become virtual masters of the country. Garrisons were found at Ramah, Michmash, and Geba. Philistine incursions during harvest time, to carry off the ripe corn, were events to be regularly expected. There was no smith found throughout the land of Israel, for the Philistines said :

“Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears : but all the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen every man his *share*, and his coulter, and his *axe*, and his mattock.”—1 Samuel xiii., 19-20.

Saul and Jonathan were the only persons who bore arms. It was thus even worse than in the time of Deborah, when

“There was not a shield or spear to be seen among forty thousand in Israel.”—Judges v., 8.

Such a terrible visitation drove the people out of the land. Some even took refuge beyond the Jordan, and others sheltered themselves in those hiding places for which the passes of Benjamin, and even all parts of Palestine are noted ; and it seemed as if the Israelites were again destined to wander on the other side of the Jordan. Bethel, Mizpeh, and Shiloh, were altogether deserted. Gilgal was the rallying point of the nation. However, the spirit of the nation at last rose equal to the occasion.

BATTLE OF MICHMASH. JONATHAN'S SECOND EXPLOIT.—Seeing therefore that the Philistine yoke rested heavily upon his countrymen, Saul resolved—though only with a small band, his faithful 600—to make another effort to save them from this terrible oppression. He took up a position on the

top of a hill near to his native **Gibeah**, and there he entrenched himself. Samuel and Ahiah the high priest were also with him. The enemy was stationed at **Michmash**, about three miles from Gibeah. Between these opponents lay a deep gorge, called the **passage of Michmash**, which is described as running between two jagged points, the one called **Bozez**, and the other **Seneh**. It was here that Jonathan's second exploit took place. Being the **first to provoke** an attack from the Philistines, he was also **the first to deliver** his countrymen from their oppression. Without his father's knowledge, he determined—his armour-bearer acquiescing—to ascend the steep side of the above-mentioned ravine, and attack the enemy. His words to the armour-bearer are few, but full of courage and determination. He said :

“Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of those uncircumcised : it may be that the Lord will work for us : for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.—1 Samuel xiv., 6.

Notice also the answer of the armour-bearer to the call of his master. He is ready to follow his master anywhere.

“Behold, I am with thee according to thy heart.”—1 Samuel xiv., 7.

In this rash adventure, the conduct of the enemy was to be their only guide. If, when they appeared near the camp the Philistines resolved upon attacking them in force, they would at once retreat ; but if they simply gave a challenge they would straightway accept it. Having thus settled upon a plan of action, they climb, upon hands and feet, the steep side of the ravine, and at first dawn of day they are detected by the Philistine host, who receive them with scorn, saying :—

“Behold the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they hid themselves. Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing.—1 Samuel xiv., 11, 12.

This was a direct challenge, and Jonathan at once accepted it. Strong as a lion, swift as an eagle, he pressed on, the bow being his chief weapon, and aided by his armour-bearer, he slew at the first onset upwards of twenty men. This caused a sudden panic in the Philistine camp; so that these two heroes put to rout the whole host. To add to the confusion, **God also caused an earthquake to take place**, just at this very moment. It was, as the sacred writer puts it—

“A trembling . . . a very great trembling.”—1 Sam. xiv., 15.

The trembling of the earth, the trembling of the Philistines, the trembling of the hearts of these two heroes with victory, all, as it were, took place at the same moment. The Philistines were routed on all sides. Even those of the Israelites whom, during the last few days, they had taken as slaves, mutinied in the camp. So that when Saul's watchmen at Gibeah looked towards the opposite end of the pass, they beheld

“The multitude melting away, going and beating down one another.”—1 Sam. xiv., 16.

Unable to explain the cause of this sudden movement, **Saul inquired** whether any one had left the camp. It was found at once that his son **Jonathan** and his armour-bearer were **wanting**. Saul immediately knew what this absence meant. Meanwhile, the confusion amongst the enemy became greater, and the noise louder. Saul at the head of his small band of 600 men, immediately resolves to join in the attack. They rush up the pass, and on reaching the opposite end, to their great astonishment, they found that a general panic had seized the foe.

“Every man's hand was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture.”—1 Sam. xiv., 20.

Such was the extent of the battle, that it **reached** clean over the country, from the eastern pass of **Michmash** to the western pass of **Aijalon**, through which the enemy fled

into their own country. And the victory was so decisive, that the Philistines do not reappear till the close of the reign, viz., at the fatal rout of Gilboa.

SAUL'S Vow.—In the excitement of the moment, and carried away by the success which attended the Israelitish arms in this battle, Saul cried to heaven—

“Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies.”—1 Sam. xiv., 24.

And like Jephthah before him, he had hardly considered what the consequence might be. He little thought that his valiant son would be the victim.

When pursuing the enemy the people passed through a forest, which was bedewed in many places with the droppings of wild honey. **Jonathan**, fatigued, and **ignorant** of the **royal curse**, put forth the end of his staff into a honeycomb in order to refresh himself. And seen by one of his fellow soldiers, he was told of what his father had commanded.

“Then said Jonathan. My father hath troubled the land : see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I have tasted a little of this honey.”—1 Sam. xiv., 29.

Jonathan at once realised the folly of his father, in commanding such a thing on such an occasion. However, the moment that the day with its enforced fast was over, the people flew upon the captured cattle and devoured them, even to the neglect of the law forbidding the eating of flesh which contained blood. (Lev. xvii., 10, 11 ; Deut. xii., 23.) In order to control this violation of the sacred law, **Saul built an altar**, and ordered each man to bring his ox or his sheep, to slay them there, and eat. **This altar** would also serve as a memorial of this remarkable event. It was the **first** raised **under the monarchy**, and thus would be the **last relic of the age of vows**.

The revelry being over, the king, eager and impatient, in the dead of night proposed that they should continue their pursuit of the enemy. But Ahiah the priest suggested, that the Divine will should first be consulted. It was agreed to. **Ahiah inquired of the Lord, but received no answer to his call.** This silence on the part of God at once disclosed that something had gone wrong. Somebody had sinned. Lots were at once cast; and Saul in his wrath exclaimed—

“Though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die.”—1 Samuel, xiv., 39.

The result of the casting must have certainly convinced the king of the rashness of his vow. Jonathan was the guilty person. And if Saul had been allowed his own way, he who had done so much that day for Israel, would certainly have fallen a victim to his rash vow. But since the time of Jephthah, great changes had come over the nation. The people now felt that services like those of Jonathan must be recognised. The victory of the day was solely attributed to his prowess. Therefore they rally round him with a zeal that overbore even the royal vow.

“As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.”—1 Samuel xiv., 45.

SECTION V.

THE WAR WITH THE AMALEKITES. THE BATTLE OF EPHESDAMMIM.

1 SAM. XV.—XVII. B.C., circ. 1079—1063.

SAUL'S REJECTION.—The victory at **Michmash** signally confirmed Saul's position as a leader of the nation. It was now no longer necessary to act on the defensive. They must at once take advantage of the panic among

their surrounding enemies. Saul, therefore, resolved to attack the Ammonites, Moabites, and the Amalekites. Success attended him at every step. But in all his successes he exhibits some act of disobedience, some impetuosity of spirit which brought down upon him the anger of the Lord and of Samuel. This was especially the case in the war with the **Amalekites**. **God**, having determined on the destruction of these people, **authorised Samuel** to command Saul to march against them and destroy them utterly :

“Slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.”—1 Sam. xv., 3.

Saul therefore made immediate preparations for the attack, and gathered a force of 210,000 men at **Telaim**, in Southern Judah, and having warned the **Kenites** to betake themselves to a place of safety, he ordered the attack to be made. And the Israelites smote the Amalekites **from Havilah even unto Shur**. But contrary to the Divine command, Saul saved **Agag**, king of the Amalekites, and brought home the best of the cattle and spoil, **under the pretence** that they were for a sacrifice unto the Lord. God was angry at this, and having revealed himself to Samuel, ordered him to go and see Saul, and rebuke him for his disobedience. At first the king tried to justify his actions, in that they were well intended ; but says Samuel :—

“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”
1 Sam. xv., 22.

The king at once saw that he was to be blamed, and repented. But it was too late to avoid the consequences. The kingdom was to be taken away from him and given to another—a man after God’s own heart.

“Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.”—
1 Sam. xv., 23, 28.

SAMUEL KILLS AGAG.—Ever since his first acquaintance with Samuel, Saul held him in great respect. And a strong friendship had sprung up between the two persons. But that friendship was now to receive a severe blow. The **prophet** was about to depart,—**never to return**. However, before going, Saul was anxious that the prophet should honour him before the people, and also that they should once more worship the Lord together. To this Samuel consented. The two, therefore, offered sacrifice. And the **prophet**, mindful of the Lord's command, ordered **Agag** to be brought to him, that he **might hew him in pieces** before the Lord. This done, and the sacrifice being over, Samuel returned to Ramah, and came no more to see Saul on public matters.

DAVID IS ANOINTED KING.—But soon after his return home, the Lord appeared to Samuel, and commanded him to take an horn of sacred oil and go to **Bethlehem**, there to anoint another king over Israel. As the first king had been the people's choice, the second was to be God's choice.

It was with fear and trembling that Samuel received this message. He was afraid that Saul might know of it. And to allay his fears, God orders him **to take an heifer** with him, to make it appear as if he were going to a sacrificial feast. Accordingly to Bethlehem the prophet wends his way to seek the family of Jesse. And when he arrived there, he found the people very much terrified at his visit. However, having assured them of his **peaceable intentions**, Samuel said :—

“Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.”—1 Sam. xvi., 5.

The prophet, in the meantime, having become acquainted with Jesse, superintended the necessary purifications of that

family in order to become acquainted with the members thereof. This Jesse had **eight sons, seven** of whom were now **present**; and with eager eyes the prophet surveyed them. When he saw **Eliab**, the eldest son of Jesse, tall and handsome, he certainly thought that he was the destined King of Israel. But the Divine voice assured him it was not so. Then the second son, **Abinadab**, and the third, **Shammah**, and after him four others, passed before the prophet, but **none** of them were the **chosen of the Lord**.

Samuel therefore inquires of Jesse whether these were all. Jesse answered,

“There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. ‘And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.’—1 Sam. xvi., 11.

The youngest son of Jesse, whose name was **David**, was therefore sent for. And without delay he stood before the prophet, with his shepherd’s staff in his hand, his scrip or wallet round his neck, a mere stripling as compared with his eldest brother Eliab. God immediately acquainted Samuel that this was the person after His own heart. The prophet therefore

“Took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren.”—1 Sam. xvi., 13.

The feast being over, and the object of his visit being accomplished, Samuel returned to Ramah.

DAVID’S PARENTAGE.—Of all the Old Testament characters, there is none so well known to us as David. Saul’s family is fairly traced, but that of David is on a much more extended scale.

His father was Jesse, the son of Obed, and the grandson of Boaz and Ruth. The origin and name of his mother is wrapt in mystery. Some suggest that she was a concubine

of **Nahash**, king of the **Ammonites**, whom Jesse married. However, whether this is the case or not, it is evident that **David** was **not** of a **purely Jewish descent**. There was in him a mixture of Canaanitish and Moabitish blood. And his connection with Moab turned an advantage to him in after life (1 Sam. xxii., 3).

DAVID AT SAUL'S COURT.—Meanwhile Saul became moody and depressed in spirits, liable to sudden fits of frenzy.

"The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him."—1 Sam. xvi., 14.

And to soothe his malady, his servants suggested that they should get a skilful harpist to play before him when these fits came on. This being agreed to, enquiry was made, and it resulted in finding **David** as the most suitable person. He was therefore sent for; so that Saul's troubled spirit was henceforth to feel the influence of the music of the future psalmist of Israel. The king was so pleased with the young man that he **not only** made him his **minstrel**, but also his **armour-bearer**. However, as soon as his duties at court were over, David returned to his native Bethlehem, and became noted for strength and courage. At one time he attacks a lion, at another a bear. So that it was said of him that he played with lions as with kids, and with bears as with lambs.

THE BATTLE OF EPHESDAMMIM.—The ever active Philistines again rose in arms against Israel. This time they took up a position at Ephesdammim which was situated in Judah, between **Shochoh** and **Azekah**. The Israelites were encamped on the other side of the valley. Amongst the Philistines there was a giant named **Goliath**. He was six cubits and a span in height, with the

staff of his spear like a weaver's beam; his coat of mail weighed 5,000 shekels of brass, and his spear's head 660 shekels of iron. This giant challenged to single combat any one of the Israelites, and to decide the issue of the battle by the results thereof. None dared to meet him. Even the tall, majestic Saul declined the challenge. At last the King of Israel offered the hand of his daughter to any one of his subjects who would venture to fight this uncircumcised Philistine. Even this offer brought no one to the task. However, whilst the two armies were thus situated, **David** entered the camp, on an errand from his father to see how his **brethren fared**. And not long after his arrival, David heard the Philistine giant making his usual challenge, and he marvelled that no one dared confront this person, who defied even the protection of the Lord God of Israel. He was so astonished at their want of courage that he at once offered to go himself, and that even at the expense of **Eliab's anger**. His words were immediately reported to the king, who summoned him to his presence. The king's armour was tried on, but **David found it too cumbrous**. He therefore decided to meet Goliath only with a sling and five smooth stones which he had chosen as he walked across the ravine. The usual challenge being made, David walked to meet the giant who, seeing his opponent of such youthful appearance and almost unarmed, was naturally enraged. He said to David:—

“Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? . . . Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.”—1 Sam. xvii., 43., 44.

Those threats were met with great coolness on the part of David. Said he:—

“Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.”—1 Sam. xvii., 45.

And putting his hand into the bag, David drew forth a stone, slung it with all his might, and lodged it in the giant's forehead so that he fell upon his face to the earth. Success having attended him thus far, David rushes upon his opponent and cuts off his head with the giant's own sword. Thus he who had a short time ago defied the Israelites was now weltering in his own blood; and the Philistines whom he represented were terror-stricken at the scene, and fled before the armies of Israel. They were **pursued**, with great slaughter, even **to** the gate of **Ekron and Gath**, their own cities. This unexpected victory naturally brought David into immediate contact both with the king himself and **Abner**, the captain of the host of Israel, and the king's uncle.

SECTION VI.

SAUL'S JEALOUSY.—DAVID'S LIFE AS AN OUTLAW.

1 SAM., XVIII.-XXIII. B.C., circ. 1063—1061.

DAVID EXCITES SAUL'S JEALOUSY.—As far as David was concerned, the immediate result of his victory over Goliath was his **right to the hand of one of Saul's daughters in marriage**, together with a **large pecuniary reward**. These were the terms which had been proclaimed in favour of anyone who should overcome the champion of the Philistines. In addition to all this, David's victory also attracted the attention of **Jonathan**, the son of Saul; and an immediate and lasting **friendship** sprang up between these two heroes. It was but natural that the hero of Michmash should sympathise with the daring

shepherd of Bethlehem. **David** also became so popular amongst his countrymen, that his popularity was embodied in the national hymns of victory. It was said :

“Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.”—1 Sam. xviii., 7.

This was gall and wormwood to the king. And it so aroused his jealousy, that, on one occasion, when David was engaged in playing on the harp in the royal presence, **Saul aimed a javelin at him**, and would have pinned him to the wall had not he been able to avoid the blow. And each time an attempt was made upon his life, it seemed as if God Himself directly guided the actions of both Saul and himself. Thus instead of strengthening his own position on the throne, Saul became an instrument in promoting David towards his destined position.

“David behaved wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him.”—1 Sam. xviii., 14.

At last Saul began to suspect that David was the person whom the Lord had chosen as his successor, to the exclusion of his own family. He therefore exposes him to danger, in the hope of getting rid of him. In the first place,

“He removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand.”—1 Sam. xviii., 18.

and sent him on expeditions. But David's success and prudence, in all that he undertook, won for him still more favour with the people. In the second place, he promised him his eldest daughter, **Merab**, if he only fought with success against the Philistines. David at once undertook the task, and instead of falling in battle, covered himself with fresh glory. But when the time for the marriage came, **Merab** was given to another. However, in the meantime **Michal** the king's second daughter, had fallen

in love with David. Always ready to take advantage, the king names as Michal's dowry that David should slay a hundred Philistines. David, as usual, goes and brings back proof of having killed twice the number. The marriage was this time celebrated, and David became captain of the royal body-guard, a post second only, if not equal, to that of **Abner**. Though now one of Saul's own family, this, instead of allaying the king's fears, increased his jealousy. He went so far as to order Jonathan and his courtiers to kill David. But Jonathan informed his friend of his father's intentions. And through his pleading, a partial reconciliation ensued; so that David returned once more to court. But his life was anything but secure. For, immediately an opportunity was given, Saul attempted to take it. On one occasion his own vigilance, on another his wife **Michal** saved him from being a victim. On the last occasion, the king's officers, charged to put him to death, penetrated to his bedroom, but only to find in the bed instead of David, an image (or teraph) with the head enveloped in a net of goat's hair. His wife Michal had previously let him down through the window.

DAVID AT NAIOTH.—David now fled to **Naioth**, where Samuel presided over a college or school of the prophets. News of his hiding-place reached Saul's ears, and he immediately sent messengers to take him. But on approaching the place, they were so overcome by the sight of the prophets performing their sacred functions, that they found themselves unable to offer David any violence, and were **constrained to join in the religious services** going on at the time. This happened the second and even the third time when the officers were sent on such an

errand, until at last Saul determined to go in person. But the same result followed. And for the second time was the question justified :

“Is Saul also among the prophets?”—1 Sam. xix., 24.

DAVID FLIES TO NOB.—One might have thought after the incident at **Naioth**, that all further danger to David was at an end. But we will find on examination of the history that the contrary was the case. Anxious to know Saul's feelings towards him now, David seeks an interview with Jonathan at **Ezel**, a well-known stone near **Gibeah**. At once, on their meeting, David pours forth his feelings to his friend Jonathan, and implores him to try and find out whether any change had taken place in the king's mind. A solemn compact was at once ratified between the two. David, on the one hand, promises to show kindness both to Jonathan himself and also to his posterity ; and, on the other hand, Jonathan promises to ascertain the king's feelings towards David. David would have only to wait three days before he knew the result. For within that time Jonathan, with his bow and armour-bearer, would return to that very stone where they had their interview. They would also be accompanied by a lad. **Jonathan** would shoot three arrows, as if shooting at a mark, and would also utter certain words to the lad, which David would overhear. These words were to decide the point. If Jonathan said to the lad—

“Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, take them—”

then David was to understand that all was safe. If he said—

“The arrows are beyond thee—”

then David was to know that the king's anger could not be appeased. The next day was a **Festival** of the **New Moon**,

and Saul would hold a solemn feast. On these occasions Abner, Jonathan, and David were expected to be present. Now, as agreed between the two friends, this would give an opportunity of ascertaining the king's feelings, if David only kept away. The conduct of the king on observing his absence was to be taken as an omen.

The day of the feast duly arrived. David was absent, and the king was wroth. This was taken as a bad omen. At the appointed time both **Jonathan** and **David** repaired to **Ezel**. The three arrows were shot as agreed upon, and the lad ran to pick them up. **Jonathan** cried to him—

“Is not the arrow beyond thee?”

A bad omen for David, which necessitated him seeking an immediate refuge. But before departing he must once more see his friend Jonathan. The two meet and embrace each other with many tears. And David, after listening to his friend's last request, viz., that he should be kind to his posterity, commenced his flight to a secure distance from the court. Calling at **Nob**, to which place the tabernacle had by this time been removed, he obtained from the high-priest **Ahimelech**, under a false pretence, a supply of **shew-bread** for provisions, and the **sword of Goliath** to assist in his defence. With these he fled away, resolved to take refuge amongst his enemies—the Philistines.

DAVID AMONGST THE PHILISTINES.—Not considering himself safe at Nob, the fugitive now repaired to **Achish**, king of the Philistines at Gath. Here he aroused the jealousy of the people, and only escaped death by feigning himself mad.

“He scrabbled upon the the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.”—1 Sam. xxi., 13.

Therefore being dismissed from Gath, as an useless and troublesome person, he now fled to the **Cave of Adullam** in Judah. Here he was joined by his relatives and others who were involved in debt and discontented with Saul's government,—in all they amounted to about 400. From here he goes to **Mizpeh of Moab**, in order to entrust his parents to the care of the king. He naturally felt that even in a secluded spot like the Cave of Adullam, his aged father and mother were not secure. His next place of refuge was the **forest of Hareth**, having been told by the prophet Gad, not to remain longer at Adullam.

SAUL MASSACRES THE PRIESTS AT NOB.—Saul was now highly excited against David. He began to suspect that there existed an extensive conspiracy against himself and therefore in favour of David. He also suspected **Jonathan** of having a hand in it. And further, having heard of the assistance which **Ahimelech** had rendered to David at Nob, he regarded all the priests of Ahimelech's family as accomplices in this fancied plot. He therefore summoned them all before him, and gave orders for their being slain; orders so sanguinary that even his own servants shrunk from their execution. **Doeg**, alone, an **Edomite** who had been present during David's visit to Nob and who was Saul's informer, would execute the deed!

"And Doeg, the Edomite . . . slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod."—1 Sam., xxii., 18.

The city of Nob also, with its inhabitants, cattle, and property, Saul utterly destroyed. **Abiathar**, one of the sons of Ahimelech, alone escaped the massacre; and he fled for protection to David. On the part of Saul this was an act of despotic cruelty; but it must also be regarded as a fulfilment of the divine denunciation against the house of Eli.

DAVID RESCUES KEILAH.—About this time David heard that the Philistines had come up to carry away the harvest from the threshing-floors in **Keilah**. He enquires of the Lord whether he should march against them. The answer being in the affirmative, he, at the head of about 600 men, marched against the enemies and rescued the town. Here he is joined by Abiathar; and they would have remained here, had not David heard that Saul was about to march against him, and that the men of Keilah would deliver him up. He therefore withdrew with his 600 men to the **wilderness of Ziph**, in the eastern part of Judah, towards the Dead Sea. Here he received, for the last time, **a visit from Jonathan**, with whom he renewed his covenant of friendship, and from whom he learnt that his father Saul, fully expected that David would be his successor on the throne. In which case Jonathan hoped that he himself would be the next.

SAUL AND THE ZIPHITES.—Saul follows David everywhere, but without success. However, hopes were now held out to him by the Ziphites, who informed him of David's hiding place in the **hill of Hachilah**, and also promised him their assistance. Under their guidance therefore he again pursues David, and found that he and his men had removed to the **wilderness of Maon**. Here the pursuers and pursued were only separated by a hill. And David now certainly thought that he would fall a victim, but a messenger arrived unto Saul, informing him of a **Philistine invasion**. Saul therefore immediately returned and directed his attention to this threatening danger. And David, in the meantime, retired to the strongholds of **Engedi**, a rocky district on the western borders of the Dead Sea.

SECTION VII.

THE DEATH OF SAMUEL AND SAUL.—THE
BATTLE OF MOUNT GILBOA.

1 SAM. XXIV.-XXXI. B.C., circ. 1061—1056.

DAVID FORBEARS TO SLAY ~~SAMUEL~~ ^{SAUL} AT ENGEDI. — Saul's operations against the Philistines were successful; and after their retreat, he—at the head of 3,000 men—immediately renewed his pursuit of David, who as before mentioned, had taken refuge in the strongholds of **Engedi**. Here David had an opportunity of taking the life of his relentless enemy; but he spared him. It so happened that **Saul selected** as a place of retirement and probably for sleep during the heat of the day, a cave occupied by David and his men. His followers at once congratulated David upon having his enemy so completely in his power, and advised him to take his life away. But David, in those memorable words—

“The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.”—1 Sam. xxiv.. 6.

refused to do this, and contented himself with secretly cutting off the skirt of the king's robe. Presently the king left the cave and David followed, crying after him “**My lord the King.**” Saul looked behind him, and David, bowing before him with his face to the ground, expostulated with him in words of touching beauty (1 Sam. xxiv. 9-15), and in the **skirt of his robe** bade the king to behold a **pledge of his unwillingness to do him any harm.** Saul's heart was touched; David's forbearance seemed to him like an act of superhuman virtue; he burst into tears and remorsefully confessed that the crown of Israel was indeed designed for a nobler and better man than himself.

Before they parted, however, Saul extracted a promise from David, that he would not destroy the posterity of his predecessor when he succeeded to the throne of Israel. After this Saul returned to **Gibeah**, and David, being well aware of the capriciousness of the king, continued to occupy his stronghold.

SAMUEL'S DEATH AND CHARACTER.—For some time the famous prophet has disappeared altogether. The sacred narrative seemed centred on the doings of David and Saul. However, we now hear that about the end of David's wanderings—

"Samuel died; and all the Israelites . . . lamented him and buried him . . . at Ramah."—1 Sam. xxv., 1.

In the death of Samuel we lose sight of one who has had a great deal to do in the formation of the Monarchy. **The history of his life and judgeship**, of his care for the people, of their profound respect for him, and of his dealings with both Saul and David, is **the history**—the early history especially—**of the Israelite Monarchy**. His character stands in a bright light in the sacred narrative, and its varied excellences are well set forth. A **second Moses** in energy, zeal, and fidelity, in love also for the people, and in earnest longing for their true welfare; like Moses, also, he was stern as an avenger of any dishonour to God, and unrelenting in his hatred of idolatry and his punishment of idolaters; and he was like Moses in being alone in Israel—having sons, as Moses had, but those sons not so trained up by him as to become worthy of inheriting any of his excellences. It is the one weak point in Samuel's character, that he should have failed in bringing up his own family; as his attachment to Saul, which nothing could dissolve, is one amongst not the least beautiful traits in his character.

DAVID MARRIES NABAL'S WIFE.—From **Engedi**, David went to the **wilderness of Paran**. Here, however, he appears to have made no long stay; and the scene of the next recorded incident of his life lies in the **wilderness of Maon**. His provisions failing him, at this place he applied in distress to **Nabal**, a rich man of **Carmel**, a descendant of Caleb of the tribe of Judah. This **Nabal**, it appears, was a large sheep-master, possessing three thousand sheep and one thousand goats, which David had protected whilst in the neighbourhood; and as it was shearing time **Nabal** kept open house; but being of a churlish and coarse disposition, he refused David's request. The young warrior was greatly irritated by this refusal, more so indeed than the occasion justified; and he would have put Nabal and his family to the sword had he not been pacified by the gentle entreaties of **Abigail**, Nabal's wife. Abigail, on hearing what had passed, hastily loaded several asses with provisions of all kinds, and unknown to her husband sent them to David. She also accompanied them, and pleaded her case in these famous words:—

“Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he: Nabal is his name, and folly is with him.”—1 Sam. xxv., 25.

David was so pleased with the temper and conduct of Abigail, that upon the **death of Nabal**, which happened about **ten days afterwards**, he made her his wife. His former wife **Michal**, Saul's daughter, had in the meantime been given to **Phalti**, the son of Laish of Gallim. David also married **Ahinoam** of Jezreel.

SAUL IN DAVID'S POWER AGAIN.—After the incident with Nabal and Abigail, David returned to the **wilderness of Ziph**, and once more came to the hill of **Hachilah**. But

his retreat was soon made known to Saul, who forgetting his repentance at **Engedi**, once more, together with Abner his general and 3,000 chosen men, went in search of him. Here the king was again reprov'd by the forbearance of David who entered **his camp at night**, accompanied by Abishai his nephew, and carried off the **spear** from the king's bolster and a **cruse of water** from his side, without inflicting on him the slightest personal injury. Having returned to the opposite hill, David called aloud to **Abner**, and reproached him for his negligence. He also exhibited the spear and cruse of water as a proof of his fidelity to the king. Once more Saul confessed his own wickedness and the just conduct of his son-in-law. But David could no longer trust in his sincerity; so that he again retired to Achish, king of Gath, who gave him **Ziklag** as a residence for himself and band. Here he remained until the death of Saul, a period of **one year and four months**, making occasional excursions against the **Geshurites, Gezrites, and Amalekites**; he also won the confidence of Achish by declaring that his expeditions were directed against Judah. This act of unjustifiable imposture is to be regarded as a temporary forgetfulness of God, and should serve, not for our imitation, but for our warning.

DAVID AT ZIKLAG.—**Achish**, rejoicing in so serviceable an ally, now united his forces with the other Philistine lords in an invasion of Israel, calling upon David and his band to join in the expedition. Thus David's insincerity towards Achish involved him now in a serious difficulty. It seemed as if he would be compelled to take his choice between fighting against his country, or to be convicted of duplicity and intrigue, and thus to forfeit the protection of

Achish. However, God came to the rescue, and delivered him from this dilemma.

The friends of Achish mistrusting the fidelity of David and his band, insisted on sending them back. Sensible of his embarrassed position, David gladly seized the opportunity and returned. But on reaching **Ziklag**, he found that during their absence, the Amalekites had plundered and burnt the place, and had also carried off the people, with his own wives and property. Having inquired the will of the Lord in the matter, through Abiathar the High-priest, he at once pursued them; and being informed of their whereabouts by a famished Egyptian, he came up with them, and regained the whole of the persons and lost property, together with a large amount of booty. And when he returned to Ziklag, he divided the spoil into certain portions, which he sent as presents to the elders of the several towns which he and his men had been accustomed to visit in their wanderings.

THE BATTLE OF MOUNT GILBOA: THE DEATH OF SAUL AND JONATHAN.—The time of Saul's death now approached, and a presentiment of evil seemed to oppress his spirit. The Philistine armies, under Achish, had now penetrated as far as **Shunem** in the Plain of Jezreel. And a little to the south of them, Saul was encamped with his army on **Mount Gilboa**. He was no longer the military enthusiast of former days, neither was he animated by confidence in Jehovah. He simply gazed with a trembling heart upon the enemy's host.

"And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets."—1 Sam. xxviii., 5, 6.

However, in this extremity, he had recourse to a **woman** residing at **Endor**, near Mount Tabor, who was supposed

to possess the power of divination by necromancy, to whom he went by night in disguise, and desired her to call up the **spirit of Samuel**, from whom he would ask advice concerning the critical position of affairs. The witch and king were soon astonished by the actual appearance of the prophet from his tomb, but in place of friendly consolation, they heard nothing but fearful prophecies and mysterious denunciations.

"The Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hands of the Philistines: and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me."—1 Sam. xxviii, 19.

Broken-hearted Saul returned to the fated field, to witness and to share in the events which had been foretold.

"The Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, Saul's sons. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers. Then said Saul unto his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men that same day together."—1 Sam. xxxi, 1-6.

The Philistines afterwards stripped the bodies of Saul and his sons. The head and armour of the king they sent into Philistia, and the armour was subsequently placed in the temple of Ashtaroth; the corpses they fastened on the wall of Bethshan, a town west of the Jordan, and afterwards called Scythopolis. However, the Jabesh-Gileadites from the east of Jordan afterwards recovered the bodies, burnt them, and buried them beneath a tree, and fasted seven days.

The news of Saul's death was brought to Ziklag to David by an Amalekite, who had been present at the battle. This

fugitive, thinking he was sure of a reward, pretended to have slain him himself, and as a proof he brought with him Saul's crown and the bracelet he wore on his arm. But instead of rewarding him, David was wroth with him for having touched the Lord's anointed. And he therefore commanded one of his young men to put this pretender to instant death. Afterwards David burst into a strain of passionate lamentation for Saul and Jonathan. The elegy which he wrote on the death of Saul and Jonathan deserves the attention of every Bible student. Though not within the First Book of Samuel, it is worthy of our attention. It is as follows:—

"The wild roe, O Israel, on thy high places is slain.

How are the mighty fallen!

Tell ye it not in Gath, proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon,

Lest there be rejoicing for the daughters of the Philistines,

Lest there be triumph for the daughters of the uncircumcised.

Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew nor rain upon you!

Nor fields of offerings;

For there was the shield of the mighty vilely cast away—

The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty,

The bow of Jonathan turned not back.

And the sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,

And in their death they were not divided!

Than eagles they were swifter, than lions more strong.

Ye daughters of Israel, weep for Saul,

Who clothed you in scarlet, with delights,

Who put ornaments of gold on your apparel:—

How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!"

Here notice the climax, the immense love of friend for friend. Yea, more than a friend—a brother.

"O Jonathan, on thy high places thou wast slain!

I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan.

Pleasant hast thou been to me exceedingly!

Wonderful was thy love to me, passing the love of women.

How are the mighty fallen!

And perished the weapons of war!"—2 Sam. i., 17-27.

—Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. ii.

SAUL'S CHARACTER.—With all his energy and ability, Saul was the slave of mere impulse—without high aims and fixed purpose—and consequently vacillating in his plans and operations. He had nothing of the **true theocratic spirit**; but, seeking only his own honour and aggrandisement, he became, so far as in him lay, no better than an arbitrary, ambitious, and cruel despot, like the kings of the surrounding nations. He therefore stands forth before us for our warning, as the type of a class of men who seeking to save their life, do lose it.

PART II.

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

WHY SO CALLED?—It is so called, not because Samuel himself was the writer, but because Samuel is the centre figure of the account contained in it. It is also called the “**First Book of Kings.**” There is also a second book which bears the name of the great prophet, called the “2nd Book of Samuel,” otherwise called “**2nd Book of Kings.**” Now, both these titles are very appropriate. If we look upon them as an isolated history, containing an account of Samuel’s administration and its results, which acted as a connecting link between the government by judges and that by kings, then they ought to bear the name of the prime mover of the age, viz., Samuel. Compare with this the Book of Joshua. But if we look upon them as forming one history with the so-called two “Books of Kings,” then they ought to be called 1st and 2nd Book of Kings.

WHO WROTE IT?—**Samuel** himself is supposed to have written the first twenty-four chapters; the remainder is supposed to have been supplied by the prophets **Gad** and **Nathan**. For in 1 Chron. xxix., 29, we find the following words:—

“Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.”

But it is clear from internal evidence, that Samuel could not have been the author of the two books bearing his name. Because in chapter xxv. of the first Book, an account of Samuel’s death is given; and the remaining chapters of the **first**, and the whole of the **second Book**, describe events which occurred after Samuel’s death.

CONTENTS.—It comprises a period of a little less than 100 years, viz., from the birth of Samuel, 1149 B.C., to the death of Saul, 1055 B.C. In it we have an account—

1. Of the transactions during the Judgeship of Eli. (Chaps. i.-iv.)

2. Of the Israelites during the Judgeship of Samuel. (Chaps. v.-xiii.)

3. Of Saul, and the transactions of his reign. (Chaps. xiv.-xxxi.)

STYLE OF THE BOOK.—The style is clear, simple, and forcible. The chief difficulties (for an account of which see notes) are—

(i.) The geographical statements of chapters ix. and x.

(ii.) The uncertainty with regard to the numerals in chapters vi., 19, and xiii., 1.

There are no contradictions or disagreements of any kind in the statements contained therein, as compared with each other or with the Books of Chronicles. The only appearance of this difficulty exists in chapter xxiv. as compared with chapter xxvi., where see notes.

REFERENCES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Luke i., 46.

Acts xiii., 22.

Mark xii., 33.

Matt. xii., 3, 4.

Mark ii., 25.

Luke vi., 4.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Whence does the Book derive its name ?
2. Who is supposed to have written this Book ? Give your reasons.
3. Give a short summary of the contents of the Book.
4. What other titles have been given to the Books of Samuel ?
5. Under what circumstances have references been made in the New Testament to this Book ? Quote the most pointed passages, and say to what events in the Book of Samuel do they refer.

CHAPTER I.

ANALYSIS.

Elkanah has two wives, Hannah and Penninah. His family amongst the most constant attendants at Shiloh. Hannah, unable to bear the insults of Penninah, prays for a child. Her request is granted, and she devotes him as a Nazarite.

NOTES.

V. 1. Ramathaim-Zophim (= *the two hills of the watchmen or of the Zuphites*).—This place, according to tradition, was situated on an eminence four miles north-west of Jerusalem. Ramathaim (= *the two hills*) is the dual form of Ramah, and Zophim (= *watchmen or Zuphites*) is the plural of Zuph. With it compare Baalim, the plural of Baal. In chap. ix., 5, we have the land about Ramah called the “land of Zuph,” which expression seems to imply that Zophim must mean Zuphites. Ramathaim corresponds to the Arimathæa of the New Testament.

“**An Ephrathite**,” *i.e.*, of the tribe of Ephraim.

V. 2. “He had two wives.”—This was not only sanctioned by the example of Jacob (Gen. xxix.), Ashur (1 Chron. iv., 5), Shaharaim (1 Chron. viii., 8), David (1 Sam. xxv., 43), Joash (2 Chron. xxiv., 3); but was even permitted in those days by the law (Deut. xxi., 15).

“**Hannah**” (= *beauty, or charm*).—This name is the same as the Anna in Luke ii., 36.

“**Penninah**” (= *pearl*).—It corresponds to our name Margaret.

We may here notice those instances in the Bible of women who have been made famous, by Divine interference, through their progeny—Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Elizabeth, and Mary the mother of Jesus.

V. 3. “Went up out of his city yearly.”—Literally, “**year by year.**” It had been the custom of the Israelites to attend at Shiloh during the three great festivals—Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of the Tabernacles; but the word “yearly” in this verse, seems to suggest that this practice had fallen out during these unsettled times. In fact, it suggests more, viz., that one feast must have been substituted for the three, which may of course have coincided with one of the three previously mentioned.

“**Lord of hosts,**” *i.e.*, Lord of the myriads of holy angels, who people the celestial sphere (1 Kings, xxii., 19).—The word “**hosts,**” means the same thing as that of “**army**” in Dan. iv., 35.

Shiloh (= *peace*).—A city of the tribe of Ephraim, situated amongst the hills, north of Bethel, and twelve miles from Shechem. Here the Tabernacle and Ark remained from the time of Joshua to the death of Eli. We next hear of the tabernacle at Nob (iv., 3).

We may here notice that the word **Shiloh** was the prophetic name of Christ.

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.”—Gen. xlix., 10.

V. 5. “A worthy portion,” *i.e.*, a double portion. Enough for two people.

V. 7. This verse ought to read thus:—

“And so she did year by year, as often as she went up to the house of the Lord, so she provoked her.”

V. 9. "Temple of the Lord."—The use of the word temple in this passage has been thought by some as a proof of the late date of the composition of the Book. For, they say, the first temple was not built till Solomon's reign. The application of it to the Tabernacle occurs three times, viz., Chap. iii., 3, Ps. v., 7, and here.

V. 11. "She vowed a vow."—The period of the Judges—including Eli and Samuel—has been rightly called the "**age of vows**." The oath in the Benjamite war (Judges xxi., 5), Jephthah's vow (Judges xi., 30), Hannah's vow, and Saul's rash oath (chap. xiv., 24), all belong to the same period. For the law of vows in the case of married women, see Num. xxx., 6-16.

"I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life," *i.e.*, he was to be a Nazarite (= *separated*) for life.—During the term of his consecration, the Nazarite was bound to abstain from (Num. vi., 1-5)

- (i.) Wine, grapes, and anything made from the vine.
- (ii.) Cutting his hair.
- (iii.) Touching a dead body, even that of his nearest relation.

Samuel, Samson, and John the Baptist are the only Nazarites of whom we have any account.

V. 19. Ramah, *i.e.*, Ramathaim-Zophim.—See chap. i.

V. 20. "Samuel" (= *heard of God*).—He was so called because he was given in answer to prayer. Ishmael is also of the same meaning.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Trace the genealogy of Elkanah, as given in this chapter.
2. What other name is given to Ramathaim-Zophim?
3. What were the names of Elkanah's wives? Which was his favourite?

4. Quote Eli's unjust reproof of Hannah, when he saw her praying in the Sanctuary.

5. How did the High-priest address Hannah, when he found that he had misjudged her?

6. What was Hannah's reason for naming her first-born son, Samuel?

7. When Hannah took Samuel to be presented to the Lord at Shiloh, what offerings did she take? *30 - 1000*

8. Quote, in the words of the Bible, Eli's address to her on that occasion.

9. How long after the entrance of the Israelites to Canaan was Samuel born?

10. Have we any other instances in the Bible of women made famous through their sons? *Sarah - Rebekah Rachel Dinah*

11. Name the three great Jewish festivals. *Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles*

12. Can you in any way justify Elkanah's conduct in having more than one wife! Give reasons for your answer. *No*

13. The geographical position and meaning of Ramathaim-Zophim and Shiloh. What other use than that of a place is made of the name Shiloh? Give quotation. *1 Sam 3:21*

14. Draw a plan of the Tabernacle.

15. State the meaning of the word Nazarite, and give the three prohibitions contained in the vow.

16. Name the only two instances of Nazarites of whom we have any account in the Old Testament. Do we know of any Nazarites in the New Testament?

17. Explain the allusions—

(i.) Am not I better to thee than ten sons? *1 Sam 1:11*

(ii.) Her adversary also provoked her sore. *1 Sam 1:12*

(iii.) Went up out of his city yearly. *1 Sam 1:13*

CHAPTER II.

ANALYSIS.

Hannah's song. The wickedness of Hophni and Phinehas. The man of God reproves Eli.

NOTES.

V. 1. "Hannah prayed, and said."—This song of Hannah, verses 1-12, is both poetical and prophetical. She was a prophetess of the first class, for besides foretelling her own fruitfulness, as in verse 5, she also foretells the judgments of God on the Philistines, and **describes the promised Saviour of the World as a king**, even before there was a King in Israel:—

"The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken . . . and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed (Verse 10.)"

She first applied to Him the Hebrew title of **Messiah**, *i.e.*, **Christ** in Greek, and **Anointed** in English. The other songs of a similar character in the Bible are those of **Miriam**, **Deborah**, and the **Virgin Mary**. The last has strong resemblance to this; Ps. cxiii. forms a link between the two.

V. 2. "Any rock like our God."—The word "**Rock**" is here symbolically used for "**refuge**." The term as applied to God is first found in the Song of Moses (Deut. xxxii., 4), where it is used in juxta-position with the word "**salvation**."

V. 5. "Have hired out themselves for bread."—As an instance of hire paid in bread see verse 36, and Ezekiel xiii., 19.

“Ceased,” *i.e.* “were at rest”—“did no work.”—Hence the meaning is **“they were filled.”**

V. 10. **“He shall give strength unto his king and exalt the horn of his anointed.”**—This is a most remarkable passage, for when Hannah gave utterance to this song, there was no King over Israel. Hence we must consider the passage as prophetic both of David the type and Christ the antitype. **David** was to be raised to the throne, to strike a blow to the Philistine power, and triumph over all the enemies of Israel. **Christ**, the anointed, was to be exalted to the right hand of God, there to sit as King and Judge of the world.

V. 11. **“The child did minister unto the Lord.”**—The child here mentioned is Samuel. The word **“minister”** is used in three different senses in Scripture. It is applied to those who

- (i.) Serve the Lord as priests and Levites. (Ex. xxvii., 35-43.)
- (ii.) Aid the priests in Divine Service, *e.g.* the Levites. (Num. iii., 6.)
- (iii.) Render any special service to a Man of God, *e.g.* Joshua, Moses’ minister. (Num. xi., 28.)

Samuel, being a Levite, the word is applied to him under the second case.

V. 12. **“Sons of Belial”** (*= lawlessness, worthlessness*). This phrase is of frequent occurrence in the Books of Samuel. **“Belial”** must not be regarded as a proper name in the Old Testament, but as corresponding to the word “lawlessness. Hence, since **“Belial”** means lawlessness, **“Sons of Belial”** must mean lawless men. In the New Testament the term Belial is applied to Satan.

V. 13-16. In these verses we have an illustration of the grasping rapacity of the sons of Eli. The law of Moses had defined exactly what was to be the priests’ portion of every

peace-offering (Lev. vii., 29-34). It also gave express directions about the burning of the fat, which typified the sacrifice of Christ. It was therefore a gross act of disobedience and lawlessness on the part of Hophni and Phinehas to take more than the law directed. The offence moreover was aggravated by the improper time and manner of arguing their claims. The law directed that the division of the shares of the priests and the offerer was to take place after the sacrifice, but the sons of Eli demanded their portion before the offering was ever brought to the altar. Can we wonder then that, with such an impious priesthood, "**men** **abhorred the offering of the Lord ?**"

V. 14. "Strooke."—This is an old form for **struck**.

V. 15. "Sodden," *i.e.*, Boiled. From seethe, sod, sodden.

V. 18. "Girded with a linen ephod."—The "**ephod**" was the garment which God commanded Moses to make for Aaron. It consisted of two parts, one of which covered the back and the other the front, *i.e.* the breast and upper parts of the body. These were clasped together on the shoulder with two large onyx stones, each having engraved upon it six of the names of the tribes of Israel (see Exod. xxviii., 4-30.) There were two kinds, one gorgeously decorated which the priests wore, and the other a plainer sort, which the Levites and those who were temporarily engaged in the Temple service wore. (2 Sam. vi., 14 ; 1 Chron. xv., 27.) The linen ephod worn by Samuel would therefore be of the plainer kind.

V. 22. "Women that assembled," *i.e.* "Women that served." Their service probably consisted in doing such work as spinning, knitting, embroidering, mending, &c., for the Tabernacle.

V. 23. "Why do ye such things?"—The notorious wickedness of his sons should have moved Eli to far greater severity than the mere reproof contained in this and the following verses. To rebuke gently on such occasions is rather to countenance the fault, and argues a want of detestation of it. God, indeed, so interprets Eli's conduct, for in v. 29, He calls it "**a kicking at his sacrifice.**"

V. 26. "And the child Samuel, etc."—Literally, "The child Samuel advanced and grew and was acceptable both with the Lord and also with men." With this description of Samuel's growth compare that of our Lord in Luke ii., 52 :—

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

V. 28. "To wear an ephod."—This would be the high priest's ephod, in which was Urim and Thummim.

V. 29. "Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice?"—This is an expression signifying the highest irreverence and contempt of God's authority. It is taken from Deut. xxxii., 15.

"Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked . . . he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation."

V. 30. "I said indeed that thy house."—In this verse we have an instance of God revoking a decree which he had made in favour of Eli and his family. He had forfeited God's favour by being so lenient towards the glaring sins of his sons. We have no account of the time when, nor of the reason why, the priesthood was transferred from the family of Eleazar to that of Ithamar. The office was first settled upon Eleazar, and then upon his eldest son Phinehas; but on account of some sin or other, it was transferred to Eli, who was a descendant of Ithamar. After Eli it passed to his grandson Ahitub (1 Sam. xiv., 3), and remained in the family till Abiathar, the grandson of Ahitub was deprived

of it in Solomon's reign. From him it passed back to the legitimate line of Eleazar (1 Kings ii, 35).

V. 31. "I will cut off thine arm."—The arm being in man the instrument by which strength is shewn, "**the cutting off of the arm**" must therefore denote "a taking away of power and strength." In the massacre of the priests by Saul, we have a partial fulfilment of this prophecy (xxii., 18-19.)

V. 32. "Thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation," or, as in the margin, "Thou shalt see the affliction of the Tabernacle."—Two meanings might be given to this passage. There might be a reference—

(i.) To the taking of the Ark by the Philistines.

(ii.) To the taking away of the priesthood from Abiathar, and the giving it to Zadok. (1 Kings ii, 26-27.)

Taking the passage in conjunction with the marginal translation, the former seems to be the meaning. For certainly the Ark might be considered as God's habitation, and as the richest treasure which Israel received from God. But from 1 Kings viii., 63-66, we find that the enormous sacrifices offered up during Solomon's reign were a source of great wealth to the priests. Therefore, as he was to see it "in all the wealth that God shall give Israel," it may have reference to the second.

V. 35. "A faithful priest."—This is commonly supposed to have reference to Zadok, who was High priest after Abiathar. The High-priesthood continued in Zadok's line till the Babylonish captivity. Some think that there is an indirect reference in the words to Christ Himself, who was High priest after the order of Melchisedec (Heb., vii.). Others think that Samuel is meant.

V. 36. "Put me, I pray thee, &c."—Supposed to have been fulfilled in the days of Abiathar, who for treason was not only put out of his office, but deprived of the portion given to the priest. (1 Kings ii., 26-27.)

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Quote Hannah's song. What other song in the Bible has a striking similarity to this one?
2. Mention passages in the song, which contain words used in a symbolical sense. *God as our rock, etc.*
3. Are there any prophetic passages in this chapter? If so, give them and explain their meaning.
4. What character is given to Eli's sons? Give their names.
5. When any one offered sacrifice, what was it customary for the priests to do?
6. What new customs did Eli's sons introduce at the offering of sacrifice?
7. What was the ephod?
8. "Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord and also with men." Of whom were similar words to these used? Give quotation. *to Samuel*
9. Relate the words in which the man of God reminded Eli of his sins.
10. What evils to the house of Eli were foretold by the man of God, and what sign was given of their fulfilment?
11. Quote the declaration of the man of God concerning the appointment of the priesthood.
12. Who was the last High priest of the house of Ithamar? Who of the house of Eleazar succeeded him. *Phylas*
13. In what did Eli err with regard to his sons' conduct?
14. The geographical position of Ramah, Shiloh, Egypt,
15. Explain the allusions—
 - (i.) So they did in Shiloh, unto all the Israelites that came hither. *Shiloh*
 - (ii.) Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice. *Shiloh*
 - (iii.) Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priest's offices. *Shiloh*
 - (iv.) It is no good report that I hear. *Eli's sons*
 - (v.) Be it far from me. *Man of God*

CHAPTER III.

ANALYSIS.

Trust in Man of God
 The call of Samuel, who tells Eli of the coming destruction of his house.

NOTES.

V. 1. “The word of the Lord was precious in those days.”—This means that God very rarely in those days revealed his mind to any person. From the death of Moses to Samuel, we have mention of only two prophets (excepting Deborah, who was a prophetess), and these only delivered an occasional message and then retired. **Samuel, then, was the first eminent prophet** after Moses (Acts iii., 24). With him prophecy was firmly established, and from his time we have a regular succession of prophets in Israel for several ages.

“**There was no open vision.**”—Better perhaps—“There was no vision published.” That is, there was no one publicly acknowledged to be a prophet, unto whom the people might resort in order to know God’s will. In the word “vision” we might include all the ways by which God revealed His will to men.

V. 2 and 4.—Read the passage thus:—

“And it came to pass at that time that Eli was sleeping in his place; and his eyes had begun to grow dim; he could not see. And the lamp of God was not yet gone out, and Samuel was sleeping in the Temple of the Lord where the Ark of God was;” and the Lord called Samuel, &c.

V. 3. “**Ere the lamp of God went out.**”—In Lev. xxiv., 2, it is said that the lamps were to be kept burning

continually. However, this passage seems to imply that some were extinguished in the day time.

V. 7. "Samuel did not yet know the Lord."—This must not be understood in the same manner as that applied to Eli's sons in chapter ii., 12. In their case it was absence of piety and reverence, but in Samuel's case it was a want of knowledge of God's manner of making Himself known to his prophets. He therefore could not understand that it was God who called him at this time.

V. 10. "The Lord came, and stood."—This a strong phrase, implying that the Lord appeared in person to Samuel, and that it was not a mere voice or impression upon Samuel's mind.

V. 11. "Both the ears of every one that heareth shall tingle."—Meaning the deed which the Lord was about to do, would stun and amaze all who heard of it. This was fulfilled in the capture of the Ark by the Philistines, and the death of Hophni and Phinehas on the same day. It is remarkable that Jeremiah makes use of the very same phrase with regard to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. (Jer. vii., 12, 14. ; xxvi., 6, 9.)

V. 20. "Dan" (=judge).—A city on the north of Palestine, in the tribe of Reuben. Situated at the foot of Mount Libanus. Its original name was *Laish* (=lion) or *Leshem*. And it has long since ceased to be a city.

"Beersheba" (=the well of seven).—A city in South Palestine, twenty miles south of Hebron. It is now called **Bires-Siba**. It is noted as the place where Abraham made an alliance with Abimelech, king of Gerar. Here also Samuel's sons—Joel and Abiah—judged Israel. (Chap. viii.)

"From Dan to Beersheba," *i.e.*, from one end of the land to the other. With it compare our expression "From John O'Groats to Lands End."

V. 21. "Shiloh" (= *rest*).—See chapter i.

"By the word of the Lord."—Two meanings might be given to this passage.

(i.) That the Lord henceforth made himself known to Samuel not by dreams and visions, but **by speaking** to him in an **audible voice**.

(ii.) That the **"word of the Lord"** has reference to Christ, who is called the **"word of God."**—John i., 1.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. How many times did the Lord call upon Samuel before He had an answer from him? *Li.*

2. What made Samuel think that it was Eli who called him?

3. What was Eli's final advice to Samuel with regard to the voice which called upon him?

4. When Samuel assured the Lord that he was aware of His presence, what did the Lord tell him? Give your answer in the words of the Bible, and explain the reference.

5. In what had Eli sinned against the Lord?

6. Describe Samuel's conduct with regard to giving Eli an account of the vision.

7. What did Eli say would be the consequence if he concealed anything of it from him?

8. In what terms did Eli express himself after hearing the evil that would befall his house?

9. Where was the Ark situated at this time?

10. Where are Dan and Beersheba? and give the meaning of the phrase, "From Dan to Beersheba."

11. Explain the allusions—

(i.) Here am I.

(ii.) For the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord.

(iii.) The ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

(iv.) The word of the Lord was precious in those days.

CHAPTER IV.

ANALYSIS.

The battle of Aphek. The Ark is captured. Hophni and Phinehas are also slain, together with 30,000 of their fellow countrymen. Eli's death and Ichabod's birth.

NOTES.

V. 1. “And the word of Samuel.”—This may either mean—

- (i.) The word which the Lord has spoken to Samuel concerning Eli's family ;
- or (ii.) The word, which from time to time the Lord sent by him to the people, declaring His will, and calling upon the people to repent.

The natural position of these words is certainly at the end of chapter iii. ; and the mention of the Philistines connects the narrative with that in Judges xiii-xvi.

“**Philistines**” (= *those that dwell in villages, strangers.*)—As the name signifies, these were an alien race, settlers in all probability from Asia Minor and its adjacent islands, some say Crete. They seem to have made several incursions into the south-western lowlands of Palestine. (Gen. x., 14 ; Deut. ii., 23 ; Amos ix., 7. ; 1 Sam. xxx., 14.) The story of their settlement in South-western Palestine can be well compared to that of the Saxons in Britain. The Avim, who originally inhabited the same part of the land, invited these foreigners to aid them against the invading Israelites ; and the invited allies, instead of returning to their own country after all was over, made themselves masters of the situation. They thus expelled the Avim out of their own land.

These Philistines were also the longest and deadliest enemies of Israel ; and their power was concentrated in the five towns—Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron and Gath. Each of these towns was built on a slight eminence above the plain, and possessed its own dependent towns ; and they also had their own kings. Hence the name “**lordships**” of the Philistines. Their enmity extended from the time of Samson to that of David ; nor was it completely extinguished till the time of Hezekiah. Notice that the country inhabited by the Israelites themselves, viz., Palestine, should be called after these foreigners.

“**Ebenezer**” (= *stone of help*).—This place of encampment was not called Ebenezer at this time. The writer of the book mentions it by anticipation of what he is going to relate in chapter vii., 12.

“**Aphek**” (= *fortress*).—There are several Apheks in Palestine. The city mentioned here probably stood near the western frontier of Judah, close to the entrance into the western pass of Bethhoron. The fact that the messenger who brought the news of the defeat to Shiloh arrived in the evening of the day the battle was fought, clearly shows that it was not very far from Shiloh.

V. 3. “Let us fetch the Ark.”—This bringing out of the Ark seems to be but an imitation of Joshua, who marched with the Ark against Jericho. **Joshua** did it according to divine command, but the **Israelites** at this time did it on their **own responsibility**. Compare with this incident the case of the Philistines themselves in the days of David, bringing their images into the camp. (2 Sam. v., 21 ; 1 Chron. xiv., 12.)

“**Shiloh.**”—See note, chapter i.

V. 6. "Hebrews" (= *dwellers on the other side*, i.e., of *the river Euphrates*).—This was the name by which the Israelites were known to foreign nations (Ex. i. 15, ii. 16), and they were so called because they were the descendants of Abraham, who had crossed from the east to the west side of the river Euphrates. The term **Israelites** was applied to the Israelites by themselves as among themselves. Some think that the name signifies **the descendants of Eber**. (Gen. x., 21-24.)

V. 7, 8. These verses contain direct evidence that the Philistines were acquainted with the wonderful miracles performed by God in favour of the Israelites.

"These mighty gods."—Some translate this, as **"the mighty God."** The latter certainly agrees better with what has gone before, viz., "God is gone into the camp."

V. 8. "With all the plagues in the wilderness." Rather, **"with every kind of plague."**—The allusion in this passage may refer to one of two incidents. Either—

(i.) The ten plagues which were inflicted upon the Egyptians (Ex. vii-xii.).

or (ii.) The overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea.

The latter seems the more probable. For the phrase, "with every kind of plague" is equivalent to "with utter destruction"; and the term "wilderness" is several times applied to the shores of the Red Sea (See Exodus xiii., 20, xiv., 3, 11, 12). At the same time, we must not forget that there is nothing to exclude the former meaning.

V. 9. "Be strong and quit yourselves like men." With this passage compare St. Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians, "Quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. xvi., 13).

V. 11. "And the Ark of God was taken."—We might here with advantage enter minutely into the general history of the Ark :—

- (i.) **Its construction.** It was an oblong chest of shittim wood, $2\frac{1}{2}$ cubits in length (= about $3\frac{3}{4}$ feet), $1\frac{1}{2}$ cubits in breadth (= about $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet) and height; surmounted by an ornamental cornice of gold, which was fitted with four golden rings, through which the poles, whereby the Kohathites carried it, were passed. Constructed by Moses and the Israelites.
- (ii.) **Its contents.** The Tables of the Law. A golden pot with an omer of manna. Aaron's rod.
- (iii.) **Its previous and subsequent history.** It accompanied the Israelites in their wanderings in the wilderness, preceded them in the **passage of the Jordan**, and was carried round the walls of **Jericho** once a day for six days, and seven times on the seventh day. After this it was established at **Shiloh**, where it remained till the sons of Eli removed it to the camp at **Ebenezer**. Captured by the Philistines, it was taken to **Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron**; and after seven months' sojourn in the land of the Philistines, it was brought back to **Bethshemesh**. From thence it was taken to **Kirjath-jearim**, and placed in the house of **Abinadab**, whose son **Eleazar** was sanctified to look after it. In Saul's reign, it was removed to **Nob**, and again brought back to **Kirjath-jearim**, where it remained till **David** removed it, first to **Obed-Edom** (2 Sam. vi., 10.)—where it remained three months—and finally to **Jerusalem** (1 Chron. i., 5). **David** took it with him on the occasion of his flight from **Absalom**, but afterwards sent it back (2 Sam. xv., 24). **Solomon** removed it, from the tent prepared for it by David, to the **Temple**; and placed it in the **Holy of Holies** (2 Chron. v., 2). Here it is supposed to have remained till the Temple was profaned by the idolatry of Judah, in the time of

Manasseh, when the Ark had to be removed to make way for Manasseh's carved image. It was again replaced by **Josiah** (2 Chron. xxxiii., 7, xxxv., 3). Nothing certain is known of its subsequent history. It was probably taken captive or destroyed by **Nebuchadnezzar** (2 Kings xxv.)

V. 11. "Two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas were slain."—This is according to the prediction—

"In one day they shall die, both of them." (1 Sam., ii., 34.) See Ps. lxxviii., 56-64, on this event.

V. 12. "A man of Benjamin."—Jewish writers mention a tradition that this "man of Benjamin," who conveyed the tidings of Israel's defeat to Shiloh, was no other than Saul, the son of Kish, and afterwards king of Israel.

"With his clothes rent and with earth upon his head."—Rending the clothes, putting dust upon the head, beating the breast, tearing the hair, and falling prostrate upon the ground, are the usual signs of deep affliction and distress.

Notice the following instances in the Old Testament, in addition to the one mentioned here.

- (i.) Reuben rending his clothes because Joseph was not in the pit. (Gen. xxxvii., 29.)
- (ii.) Jacob rending his clothes and mourning for his son many days. (Gen. xxxvii., 34.)
- (iii.) Joseph's brethren rent their clothes when they found the cup in Benjamin's sack. (Gen. xlv., 13.)
- (iv.) The man who came to David with the news of Saul's death. (2 Sam. i., 2.)
- (v.) Tamar put ashes on her head and rent her garment of divers colours. (2 Sam. xiii., 19.)
- (vi.) Hushai, the Archite, came to David with his coat rent and earth upon his head. (2 Sam. xv., 32.)

V. 21. "Ichabod" (= *where is the glory?* or, *there is no glory*).—As what follows clearly explains, this woman felt that the Ark (which was the outward and visible sign of

God's presence) being taken, the glory was departed from Israel. **"Is departed."** Rather, **"is gone into captivity."**

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. What opinion is held with regard to the opening words of this chapter?

2. Give the geographical position and meaning of Ebenezer and Aphek. State what is mentioned of those places in this chapter.

3. Who were the Philistines? also the Hebrews?

4. What verse in this chapter clearly defines the political state of the Israelites at this time?

5. After the defeat at Aphek, what did the elders of Israel propose?

6. Where was the Ark situated?

7. When the Ark arrived in the camp, describe the feelings with which the Israelites received it?

8. What effect had this last move of the Israelites upon their opponents?

9. Which side was victorious at this battle? and state how many of the Israelites were slain.

10. What became of the Ark? also of Hophni and Phinehas?

11. Describe the subsequent history of the Ark.

12. Who brought the news of Israel's defeat to Shiloh? What do we learn from Jewish tradition with regard to this messenger?

13. In what state did the messenger arrive at Shiloh? and what effect had the news upon Eli.

14. What part of the message affected Eli most?

15. How old was Eli when he died? and how long had he judged Israel?

17. Who was Ichabod, and what does the word mean?

18. Explain "Which dwelleth between the cherubims."

19. When and by whom were the following words spoken:—

(i.) What meaneth the noise of this tumult?

(ii.) Quit yourselves like men and fight.

(iii.) God is come into the camp.

CHAPTER V.

ANALYSIS.

The wanderings of the Ark amongst the Philistines, who are punished for its removal.

NOTES.

V. 1. "Ashdod." (= *fortified place*).—This was one of the five cities of the Philistine league, and one of the seats of the national worship of Dagon. It stood on an eminence about two miles from the sea,—midway between Gaza and Joppa. It was also a place of great strength, and commanded the high road between Palestine and Egypt. For many centuries it remained an important city, and has an eventful history. In 716 B.C., it was besieged and captured by the "Tartan," *i.e.*, a general of Assyria (Isai. xx., i.). And about 616 B.C., it sustained, according to Herodotus, the largest siege on record—Psammetichus, king of Egypt, taking twenty-nine years to subdue it. Recovering from this blow, it was afterwards laid in ruins by the Maccabees, but was afterwards restored by Gabinius, B.C. 55. In the New Testament it is called "**Azotus**" (Acts viii., 40). It is now but a miserable village bearing the name "**Esdud**" with no ancient ruins to render it in the least degree interesting to the modern traveller.

V. 2. "The Philistines took the Ark of God." The following have been suggested as reasons why God permitted the Philistines to take the Ark captive:—

- (i.) To punish the presumption of the Israelites in sending for it without consulting God, which they were accustomed to do in all critical times.

- (ii.) The iniquities of the people had become so enormous as no longer to deserve the symbol of Divine Presence amongst them.
- (iii.) The sins of the priests who were slain on the battle-field had for a long time called for some judgment upon them.
- (iv.) That He might show to the heathen Philistines that His dominion reached everywhere ; that He was Lord both of the conqueror and the conquered.
- (v.) That He might show to them how powerless their own deities were in comparison to the God of Israel.

“Dagon”—(=*honoured fish*).—The national deity of the Philistines. It was represented by an image with the head and arms of a man, but the body of a fish. To a race like the Philistines, living on the sea-coast, the fish would naturally be an emblem of fruitfulness. Representations of the **“fish god”** are to be found on the walls of **Khorsabad**. The most famous temples were at Gaza and Ashdod.

V. 4. “Were cut off upon the threshold” *i.e.*, were cut off and were lying upon the door-sill, not of the temple itself, but most probably of the chapel or recess in which the statue was placed. They would thus be liable to the indignity of being trampled upon by those who entered the temple.

“Only the stump of Dagon was left to him.”—The word “stump” is not to be found in the original Hebrew. Literally the passage reads: **“Only Dagon** (*i.e.*, the fish part) **was left to him.”**

V. 5. “Tread on the threshold.”—As a mark of reverence for the spot where their idol had lain.

V. 6. “Smote them with emerods.”—**“Emerods”** is a corruption of **“hæmorrhoids.”** The emerods are therefore supposed to be the worst form of that painful disease now called **“piles.”** Others suggest that they were a kind of **“boils.”**

V. 8. "Lords of the Philistines."—By these are meant the five satraps who ruled respectively over the five cities of the Philistines. (See chap. iv.)

"Gath" (= *wine press*).—A celebrated city, south-west of Palestine, and not very far from the sea-coast. It was one of the Philistine lordships. The chief notices of it in the Bible are: It was the native place of Goliath (xvii., 4); David goes there for refuge against Saul's persecutions (xxxi., 10; xxvii., 3); captured by David (1 Chr. xviii., 1); fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chr. xi., 8); taken by Hazael (2 Kings xii., 17); retaken and dismantled by Uzziah (2 Chr. xxvi., 6).

"Ekron" (= *uprooting, emigration*).—This was the most northern of the Philistine lordships. It stood on a little eminence on the northern side of the **Wady Surar**, close to the boundary of Judah. It is now called "**Akir**." By lot it fell to the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv., 45), but was afterwards given to the tribe of Dan (Josh. xix., 43).

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. After the capture of the Ark, where did the Philistines take it?
2. Describe the events that happened in the Temple of Dagon, when the Ark was placed there.
3. What custom resulted from the destruction of Dagon?
4. What happened to the people of Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron whilst the Ark remained amongst them? State the geographical position of these towns, and events connected with them.
5. What is said of the "lords of the Philistines" in this chapter?
6. Give a description of the god Dagon. ✓
7. Explain the allusions—
 - (i.) Only the stump of Dagon was left to him.
 - (ii.) What shall we do with the Ark of the God of Israel?
 - (iii.) Let it go again to his own place.

CHAPTER VI.

ANALYSIS.

After seven months sojourn in the land of the Philistines, the Ark is returned. Having arrived at Bethshemesh, the people look into it, and are smitten for their irreverence. They therefore ask those of Kirjath-jearim to fetch it.

NOTES.

V. 2. "Diviners."—These were men who professed to predict future events, or interpret the will of heaven by the observation of omens. The summoning of these diviners is very similar to what we read of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, and Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. (See Exod. vii., 11; Dan. ii., 2.)

V. 3. "In any wise return him a trespass offering."—That is, at all events make some practical acknowledgment both of the sin committed in removing the Ark, and of the desire of deliverance from these plagues that the God of Israel has inflicted upon you.

V. 5. "Images of your emerods and . . . your mice."—This is the first definite reference to the plague of mice. The sending of these representations of the instruments of their chastisement, would be an outward acknowledgment that the plagues of emerods and mice were inflicted by God Himself, and were not a mere chance. And in doing this they would be giving the glory to the God of Israel. The traveller Tavernier observes that a similar custom still exists in India, and has done so from time immemorial. When a pilgrim goes to one of the idol temples for a cure, he takes with him an image—of gold, silver, or copper,

according to his means—representing the disease from which he is suffering, and offers it to his god. This passes as an acknowledgment that the god has inflicted that particular evil.

V. 7. “A new cart . . . kine on which there hath come no yoke.”—It was so ordered as a mark of reverence to the Ark. Compare with this, the instance of Christ riding on an ass “**whereon never man sat**” (Mark xi., 2), and his body was laid in Joseph’s “**new tomb**” “**wherein never man before was laid**” (Matt. xxvii., 60).

V. 9. “His own coast,” *i.e.*, “His own border.”—The word “**his**” refers to the Ark. Notice also the use of the word “**coast**” without any allusion to the sea-coast. It is derived from the Latin word “**costa**” (= *rib, side*). Hence generally it means “**a border**.” Now it is specially applied to land bordering upon the sea. The following instances of the peculiar usage of the word are worthy of notice.

- (i.) Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof (Matt. ii., 16).
- (ii.) The coasts of Judea (Matt. xix., 1).
- (iii.) The coasts of Gadara (Mark v., 17).
- (iv.) The coasts of Antioch in Pisidia (Acts xiii., 50).
- (v.) And their coast was from Aroer (Joshua xiii., 16).

“**Bethshemesh**” (= *house of the sun*).—This is probably the same as “**Irshemesh**” (= *city of the sun*) Josh. xix., 41. It was situated on the north-west slopes of the mountains of Judah, and on the south-east border of Dan—about twelve miles from Ekron and about two miles from the Philistine plain. Its modern name is **Ain Shems** (= *fountain of the sun*.)

“**It was a chance that happened to us.**”—Notice how slow they were to believe that their misfortunes could

have been anything else than the ordinary course of nature. The strength of their unbelief can only be measured by the completeness of the test which they apply. If cows unaccustomed to the yoke drew the cart quietly; if they would desert their calves—which was contrary to their natural instinct; if without any human guidance they went straightway to the nearest Israelitish town; then, and not before, would they believe that some supernatural power controlled their actions, and that that power was the God of Israel.

V. 12. “Lowing as they went.”—This was caused by their remembering their calves which they had left behind. It is also a most significant sign of the hand of God.

“And the Lords of the Philistines went after them.”
An additional safeguard against any deceit in the matter.

V. 13. “They of Bethshemesh were reaping.”—This passage fixes the time of the year when the incident happened, viz., the end of May or beginning of June.

V. 15. “And the Levites took down,” *i.e.*, “Members of the tribe of Levi.”—The term Levites as used in a general sense, and not as distinguished from the Priests.

V. 16. “Ekron.”—See chap. v.

V. 17. “Ashdod.”—See chap. v.

“Gaza” (= *strong*).—One of the Philistine lordships, and was also known as **“Azzah”** (Deut. ii., 23). It was situated near the Mediterranean Sea, and was one of the cities allotted to and conquered by the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv., 47 Judges i., 18), though at this time it was in the hands of the Philistines. It was the scene of one of Samson’s greatest exploits (Judges xvi., 3). Its modern name is **“Ghazze,”** a town of about 16,000 inhabitants, and built partly on an

oblong hill, without gates, walls or forts. There are, however, still visible the site of the ancient gates, one of these on the south-east looking towards Hebron, still bearing Samson's name; the tradition being that it was from that spot he carried away the gates of the city.

Askelon (= *weight* or *balance*).—This is also called **Ashkelon**, **Ascalon**, and now **Askalan**. It was situated on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, south-west of Palestine. It also was one of the chief cities of the Philistines, and was famous in the history of the Crusades, as having been besieged by Richard I., of England.

“**Gath and Ekron.**”—See chap. v.

V. 19. “Fifty thousand and three score and ten.”—Most commentators are agreed that this number is wrong. The mistake has arisen either from some corruption of the text, or from the loss of some explanatory word. Dr. Adam Clarke remarks on this passage:—“That it was very improbable that such a village as Bethshemesh should contain or be capable of employing 50,070 men in the fields at wheat harvest, much less that they could all peep into the Ark.” In Josephus the number of deaths is said to be seventy. And Dr. Kennicott has moreover found three Hebrew manuscripts in which there is no mention of the fifty thousand. Hence some suggest that the 50,000 denotes the number of inhabitants at Bethshemesh, and the 70 the number killed. The Vulgate, the Chaldee Targum, the Septuagint, the Syriac and the Arabic, all have different versions. Hence there is no doubt but that the text is corrupt. However, such errors as these do not in any way affect the general truth of the narrative. In process of transmission the text of all ancient books has been liable to the same fault.

V. 21. "Kirjath-jearim" (= *the city of the forests*).— This place was situated on the boundary line between the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and on the way from Bethshemesh to Shiloh. It is so called from an extensive forest which stood near it. But this forest has long since disappeared. It is, however, supposed to have been on the same site as the modern **Kuryet-el-Enab** (= *the city of the grape*.) It originally belonged to the Gibeonites (Josh. ix., 17), but at this time it was a city of Judah. Kirjath-jearim was also called **Baalah** (Josh. xv., 9); "**Baale of Judah**" (2 Sam. vi., 2), and **Kirjath-Baal** (Josh. xv., 60). All of which point to the existence of Baal worship at the place, at some time or other.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. How long was the Ark in the land of the Philistines?
2. Who were the "diviners" with whom the Philistines consulted? Mention other instances in the Bible where the aid of these persons is sought. *Others = false prophets*
3. What advice did the Philistines get from the priests and diviners?
4. What object had they in choosing "milch kine," and leaving their calves at home?
5. In what direction did the kine go, after they were let loose?
6. What time of the year was it when the Philistines returned the Ark? Give reasons for your answer. *May/June*
7. Who accompanied the Ark on its way to Bethshemesh?
8. Name the five Philistine lordships, and give their exact position.
9. Into whose field did the kine take the cart on which rested the ark?
10. What sin did the people of Bethshemesh commit, and what was the consequence?
11. To whom did the people of Bethshemesh send a request to fetch the Ark away? Quote the words in which they express their terror of the God of Israel.
12. The geographical position and meaning of Bethshemesh and Kirjath-jearim. State all you know with regard to these two places.

13. What reason can you suggest for the people of Bethshemesh sending the Ark to Kirjath-jearim and not to Shiloh, its former home?

14. Are there any corrupt texts in this chapter? If so, explain how it has been found out.

15. Explain the meaning of the word "coast" as used in this chapter. Mention other instances of the same usage.

16. Explain the allusions—

(i.) Lowing as they went.

(ii.) Send it not empty.

(iii.) Come ye down and fetch it to you.

CHAPTER VII.

ANALYSIS.

The Ark is brought to Kirjath-jearim, and is placed in the house of Abinadab. Eleazar is sanctified to keep it. Samuel summons the people to Mizpeh. The Battle of Ebenezer and the rout of the Philistines. Samuel judges Israel.

NOTES.

V. 1. Kirjath-jearim.—See chap. vi.

"Abinadab . . . and Eleazar his son."—Whether these persons were Levites or not, is a question which cannot be answered definitely. But after the calamity at Bethshemesh it seems highly improbable that they would entrust the Ark to anybody but a Levite. In addition to this suggestion, we also find that Abinadab and Eleazar are names found in the Levitical families chiefly.

V. 2. "For it was twenty years."—We must not understand by this twenty years, the whole duration of the Ark's sojourn at Kirjath-jearim; but the time that elapsed

before the events about to be recorded in the chapter took place. The Ark was at Kirjath-jearim between forty-six and fifty years.

V. 3. "Ashtaroth."—This is the plural form of Ashtoreth (Greek Astarte), who was the principal female divinity of the Phœnician and Canaanitish nations. Astarte is styled as the goddess or abomination of the Zidonians—Zidon being the centre of her worship. We find her name still existing on inscriptions in Cyprus and Carthage. It is supposed by some that she was originally the moon-goddess ; others again have identified her with the goddess Venus, as well as with the planet of that name. By the Israelites she was worshipped under the title of "**Queen of Heaven**," (Jer. vii., 18 ; lxiv., 17). The rites connected with this worship were of the most debased and revolting character.

V. 4. "Baalim" (= *lords*).—This is the plural of Baal (= *lord or master*), who was the supreme male divinity of the Canaanitish and Phœnician nations. The plural form Baalim is by some supposed to refer to the numerous images of the god which were set up and worshipped. By others it is said to denote the different forms under which they were worshipped. For instance, Baal-berith (= *Lord of covenants*) Judges viii., 33 ; ix., 4. Baal-peor (= *Lord of Mount Peor*) Num. xxv., 1-3. Baal-zebub (= *God of flies*) 2 Kings i., 2. Baal-zephon (= *Lord of the north*) Exod. xiv., 2-9.

V. 5. "Mizpeh" (= *watch-tower*).—There are several places of the name Mizpeh in Palestine, (1) Mizpeh of Gilead (Judges xi., 29) ; (2) Mizpeh of Judah (Josh. xv., 38) ; (3) Mizpeh of Moab (1 Sam. xxii., 3), etc. The **Mizpeh mentioned here**, the scene of this convocation of all Israel, belonged to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii., 26). This

was also the meeting-place of the national assembly on two other occasions in this period—

- (i). When war was declared against Benjamin (Judges xx).
- (ii). When Saul was declared King (x., 17).

It is conjectured that it was the same as the modern **Neby-Samwil**, a conspicuous hill about 5 miles north-west of Jerusalem.

V. 6. "Drew water and poured it before the Lord."

—It is difficult to give a satisfactory explanation of this passage ; however, the following have been suggested :—

- (i). That it was a **symbolical act** expressive of their sorrow for their past sins, and their desire to have themselves and the land purified from its stain.
- (ii). That it has reference to the special rite at the Feast of the Tabernacles, Samuel having chosen the time as a most suitable opportunity to call the people together.

V. 6. "And Samuel judged."—This, therefore, marks the commencement of Samuel's judgeship. Before he had only acted as a prophet.

V. 7. "Philistines."—See chapter iv.

They looked upon this general gathering together of the Israelites as a threat to them.

V. 10. "Samuel was offering up the burnt offering."

Though neither the Tabernacle nor the Ark was stationed here, and though Samuel was not a priest, still he was justified in this act. For the regular ministries of the Tabernacle had long since been suspended, and the Ark was no longer found at its accustomed place. Neither had God as yet appointed a special place to set His own name there ; Shiloh was destroyed. Samuel, therefore, was raised up with a special commission to supply the deficiency of this provisional and transitory state of things, and to show that though men are

tied to the use of means when appointed by God, yet God's power and grace are not tied to means, but can work independently of them.

V. 11. "Bethcar" (= *house of a lamb or house of pasture*). The place is nowhere else mentioned. It probably stood on a hill overhanging the road from the Philistine territory to Mizpeh, and close to Ebenezer.

V. 12. "Shen" (= *the tooth*).—This is not identified, but it was probably some noted rock near Bethcar and Ebenezer.

V. 14. "Ekron and Gath."—See chapter v.

"Amorites" (= *mountaineers or highlanders*).—These were the descendants of Hamor, the fourth son of Canaan (Gen. x., 16; xxxiii., 19), and, next to the Philistines, they are said to have been the most powerful enemies of Israel. On the west of the Jordan they chiefly lived on the mountains of Judah and Ephraim. On the east of the Jordan they were found between the rivers Jabbok and Arnon.

V. 15. "All the days of his life."—That is, he judged Israel in civil causes and not in military matters; for as soon as Saul was made King the military leadership was handed over to him.

V. 16. "Bethel" (= *the house of God*).—This was situated on the borders of Benjamin and Ephraim, and was near to Ai, about eight miles north of Jerusalem. It was also called **Luz** (Judges i., 23), and its modern name is **Beitin**. The following incidents have made it noted in Bible history :—

(i.) Abraham encamped here (Gen. xii., 8).

(ii.) Jacob's Vision of the Ladder, on his way to Padan-aram (Gen. xxviii., 19; xxxv., 6; xlviii., 3).

(iii.) Its people helped those of Ai in their battle against Joshua (Josh. viii., 17).

(iv.) Here Jeroboam established his idol-worship (1 Kings xii., 32-33).

“**Gilgal**” (= *the rolling*), Josh. xv., 9.—We have two places of this name in the Bible, and they are not very far distant from each other. The first, near Jericho, and the first halting-place of the Israelites after crossing the Jordan (*i.e.*, the modern Jiljulieh); and the second, near Bethel (*i.e.*, the modern Jilgilia). The former is the one meant in this passage. It is noted as the place where—

(i.) The men born in the wilderness were circumcised.

(ii.) The First Passover after their departure from Egypt was celebrated (Josh. v., 10).

(iii.) The resting-place of the Ark during the Conquest.

V. 17. “Ramah” (= *a hill*).—The same as Ramathaim-Zophim in chapter i.

Here ends the first division of the book, which records Samuel’s life and work as the last of the Judges, in connection with the old order of things. The next division opens by giving us an account of the establishment of the Monarchy.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Where was the Ark placed after its removal from Bethshemesh? Who was consecrated to look after it?

2. “That the time was long: for it was twenty years.” Explain the words twenty years in this place.

3. How long is it supposed that the Ark remained at Kirjath-jearim?

4. Explain the words Baalim and Ashtaroth.

5. Quote the words in which Samuel exhorted the Israelites to repent and humble themselves before God.

6. At what place did Samuel hold his great assembly of the Israelites? *Michal*

7. Explain “And drew water and poured it before the Lord.”

8. What reason had the Philistines for considering the assembly at Mizpeh as dangerous to them?

9. Draw an outline map of Palestine and insert the following places: Mizpeh, Ramah, Ekron, Gath, Bethel, Gilgal, Kirjath-jearim. Give the meaning of the words, and relate events connected with each.

10. Name the places which Samuel visited from year to year in circuit.

11. What evidence have we in this chapter that Samuel did not cease to judge Israel (in part), even after the appointment of Saul?

12. Who were the Amorites? And what do you know of them previous to this period?

13. What was done to commemorate the victory over the Philistines? And what did they gain by this victory?

14. When and by whom were the following words spoken—

(i.) Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

(ii.) Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God.

(iii.) Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only.

CHAPTER VIII.

ANALYSIS.

The people desire a King. Samuel is displeased at it. God's answer to Samuel's prayer. The government under kings described by Samuel. The people's reply.

NOTES.

V. 2. “Joel” (= *Jehovah is God*). “Abiah” (= *Jah is my father*).—Both names thus signify a protest against the prevalent idolatry of the times.

“Beersheba.”—See chap. iii., 20.

V. 3. “Turned aside after lucre,” or, as the Chaldee has it, “The mammon of unrighteousness.”—Lucre is

generally used for ill-gotten gains. We might here well notice the phrase: "**The love of money is the root of all evil.**"

"**The elders of Israel,**" *i.e.*, the representatives of the people.

V. 4. "Ramah."—See chapter i.

V. 5. "Make us a king to judge us."—The reason given for such a desire, is not the age of Samuel and the misconduct of his sons, but chiefly that they might be like the nations around them, most of which had an absolute sovereign. And what made it most necessary now is generally thought to have been the knowledge of the preparations which Nahash king of the Ammonites was making against them. (1 Sam. xii., 12). They therefore desired a captain and king to lead them against the foe; for they had obviously forgotten what had been accomplished for them in times past when led by the "**Captain of the Lord's Hosts.**"

V. 7. "Hearken unto the voice of the people."—God grants their request not because he approved of it, but that it might turn to their punishment and teach them a lesson. For notice what Hosea says:—

"I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath."—Hosea xiii., 11.

"**But they have rejected me.**"—The sin of the Israelites in this request for a king consisted in:—

- (i.) Their unthankfulness for past mercies.
- (ii.) Their dissatisfaction with their present mode of government when "**God was their King.**"
- (iii.) Their eager desire to be "**like other nations,**" when they ought to have deemed it a privilege to be unlike other nations, in so far as they were a special people unto the Lord (Deut. vii., 6).

(iv.) That they sold the above-mentioned prerogative for a temporal benefit.

(v.) That they should have waited God's time, and left the season of the kingdom and the choice of a king in His hands. For it had been promised to the patriarchs that kings should come out of their seed (Gen. xvii., 6 ; xxxv., 11).

V. 11. "This will be the manner of the king," *i.e.*, This will be the way he will govern, judging from the pattern you have taken.

(i.) He will support his dignity, at the expense of that which is dearest to you.

(ii.) He, similar to all who have power, will be apt to abuse it. And having the power, you will be bound to submit to him.

V. 12. "Will set them to ear his ground."—"To ear" means to plough. It is an old English word derived from the Anglo-Saxon root "**erian**" = to plough (or the Latin "**arare**."). It occurs in four other places in the authorised version, Gen. xlv., 6. ; Ex. xxxiv., 21. ; Deut. xxi., 14. ; Isa. xxx., 24.

V. 13. "Confectionaries."—This is the original form of our word "**confectioners**." They mean here not the preparers of sweetmeats but of perfumes. Hence they would correspond to our "**perfumers**."

V. 16. "Young men."—There seems to have been an error here. The word really ought to be "**oxen**."

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Give the names—with meanings—of Samuel's sons. Where did they reside as judges? *Samuel, Elkanah, and Jonathan.*
2. What character is given to them? *Sanctified.*
3. Show the difference between the gathering at Mizpeh and that at Ramah.
4. What reasons did the elders urge in favour of appointing a king?
5. How did Samuel receive the news of this desire of change?

6. "And Samuel prayed unto the Lord." What was the Lord's answer to this prayer?

7. Give, in your own words, the substance of Samuel's description of the treatment they might expect from an absolute monarch.

8. Explain—

(i.) To ear his ground. *plough*

(ii.) To be confectionaries. *make is*

(iii.) Turned aside after lucre.

9. What circumstance made the Israelites more eager for a king at this time, than on previous occasions?

10. Explain the allusions—

(i.) Go ye every man unto his city.

(ii.) But they have rejected me. *Go!*

(iii.) Thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways.

CHAPTER IX.

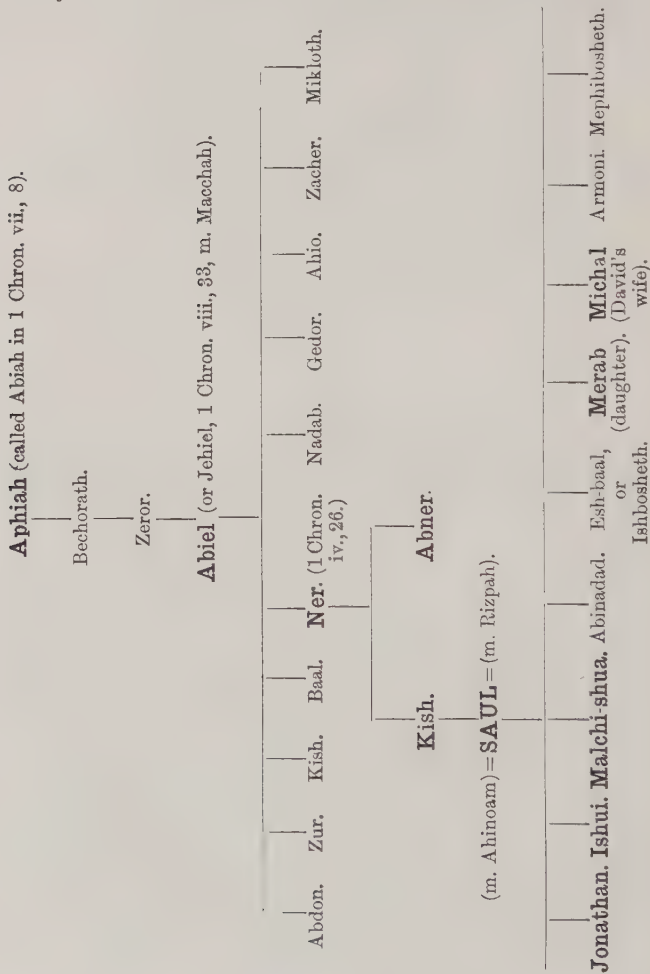
ANALYSIS.

Saul's genealogy. He goes in search of his father's asses. His servant advises him to inquire their fate from Samuel. The prophet entertains him at a feast.

NOTES.

V. 1-2. "**Kish had a son, whose name was Saul.**"—Notices of Saul's descent, in addition to that in verse 1, are found also in chap. xiv., 5, and in 1 Chron. viii., 33; ix., 39. But there seems to be a contradiction between that in 1 Samuel and that in 1 Chronicles. In the former we have Saul and Abner as grandsons of Abiel, but in the latter as his great grandsons. If that of the Chronicles is adopted, we must suppose either that a link has been dropped between Abiel and Kish in verse 1 of this chapter, or that the elder Kish, the son of Abiel (1 Chron. ix., 36), has been confounded with the younger Kish, the son of Ner. Taking the account in the Chronicles in conjunction with

the account in the two Books of Samuel, Saul's pedigree and family would stand somewhat as follows :—



V. 4. "Mount Ephraim."—See chapter i.

"Land of Shalisha."—Its exact position is unknown, but most probably near Gilgal—*i.e.*, Jiljilia (2 Kings iv., 42).

"Land of Shalim" (= *foxes*).—The situation of this also is unknown, but most probably in the neighbourhood of Shaalabbin in Dan (Josh. xix., 42.)

V. 5. "The land of Zuph."—In which Samuel's city, Ramah, was situated.—See chapter i.

V. 8. "The fourth part of a shekel."—In value about sixpence.

V. 9. This verse is clearly an addition, in order to explain the term "seer," which was not in use when the book was written.

There are three Hebrew words to designate a **prophet**—(i.) Nâbi ; (ii.) Roëh ; (iii.) Chozeh.

Nabi signifies the man as the inspired interpreter of the will of God.

Roeh and **Chozeh** both signify "one who sees" and therefore refer to the prophetic gift of seeing the visions presented to them by God.

Roeh is the one applied to Samuel, and the passage is intended to explain why he was called Roëh, and not Nâbi, which afterwards was always used.

V. 12. "He came to-day to the city."—This city is supposed to be "Ramah."

V. 16. "Philistines."—See chapter iv.

V. 20.—Read the latter part thus :—

"For whom are all the desirable things of Israel ? Are they not for thee and for all thy father's house ?"

i.e., Care not for the asses, for they are already found ; and even if they were lost, what would it matter ? Is not the best that Israel has at thy service ?

V. 24. "And the cook took up the shoulder."—The right shoulder was the priests' portion in the Levitical sacrifices (Lev. vii., 32). In this case it was probably Samuel's, and he gave it to Saul as a sign of honour.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Trace Saul's genealogy, and mention any irregularities that are found in the two accounts given of this.
2. Trace the route, as far as possible, by which Saul went in search of his father's lost asses, and reached Ramah.
3. What were Saul's personal qualifications as put forth in this chapter?
4. What difference is there between "seer" and "prophet," and which is the older term?
5. What district is meant by Mount Ephraim; and what are the supposed situation of Shalim and Shalisha?
6. What was the substance of the conversation between Saul and Samuel when they first met?
7. Relate the manner in which Samuel entertained Saul at the feast
8. Explain—
 - (i.) And the cook took up the shoulder.
 - (ii.) On whom is all the desire of Israel.
9. When and by whom were the following words spoken?
 - (i.) He is an honourable man.
 - (ii.) Behold, he is before you.
 - (iii.) This same shall reign over my people.
 - (iv.) Wherefore then speakest thou to me?

CHAPTER X.

ANALYSIS.

Samuel anoints Saul as King of Israel. Three signs are given to Saul whereby he might know the truth of Samuel's prediction. Saul is among the prophets, and is at Mizpeh chosen King by the people themselves.

NOTES.

V. 1. "A vial of oil."—Rather "**the vial of oil**," as probably there is a reference to that holy oil used for the consecration of priests (Ex. xxx., 23-33).

"Hath anointed thee."—The rite of anointing signified three things—

- (i.) The setting apart of the person to the service of God.
- (ii.) An outward sign of the person's qualification for the office.
- (iii.) His person was afterwards considered sacred and inviolable.

According to Jewish tradition, we find that anointing was only necessary when there was a change of dynasty or the succession disputed. Hence we only find mention of it in the case of Saul, David, Absalom, Solomon, Joash, Jehoahaz, and Jehu.

It is also interesting to notice that these very same ceremonies are still observed in England, at the time of coronation. The anointing is done by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the kiss of homage is given by the Archbishop, bishops, and the first peer of each rank for the rest of his order.

V. 2. "Rachel's sepulchre."—The situation of this first stage in Saul's homeward journey is wrapped in uncertainty. For in Gen. xxxv., 16-20, we find it as placed on the way from Bethel to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem—and near to Ephrath. And in this passage it seems to be between Ramah and Gibeah of Saul. Various explanations have been given, but none are wholly satisfactory. The most plausible explanation is that it was near Bethlehem, and that Samuel intentionally sent Saul out of his way, in order to meet the two men; and thus make the sign all the more remarkable.

“**At Zelzah.**”—This also is absolutely unknown.

V. 3. “The plain of Tabor” (= *stone quarry*).—This should be translated as “**The oak or teberinth of Tabor.**” What “**Tabor**” means is uncertain. Some say that it is a corrupted form of **Deborah**, and that the oak referred to is the oak near Bethel, under which Deborah, Rachel’s nurse, was buried (Gen. xxxv., 8).

“**Bethel.**”—See chapter vii.

V. 5. “The hill of God.”—Rather, “**Gibeah of God.**” By this is meant Saul’s own city, *i.e.*, Gibeah of Saul. This answer is based upon the following reasons—

- (i.) When seen among the prophets, Saul was well known to those who saw him (verse 11).
- (ii.) Here he found his uncle ; which therefore points to it as his home.
- (iii.) His home is called Gibeah in v. 26.

“**The garrison of the Philistines.**”—Three views have been taken of this word “**garrison**”—

- (i.) That it means a **pillar**, which was placed there to mark the Philistine conquest.
- (ii.) That it means an “**officer**” for the collection of taxes.
- (iii.) That it was a military post (in the ordinary sense of garrison) of the Philistines, established for the purpose of maintaining their hold upon the Israelites.

The two last seem the most probable.

“**The psaltery.**”—This was a stringed instrument, somewhat resembling a “**guitar**,” to accompany the voice.

“**The tabret**” (or timbrel).—This was a kind of tambourine or drum.

“**The pipe.**”—This was a kind of flute, producing a soft wailing note.

“The harp.”—This was the national instrument of the Hebrews, and the type of all stringed instruments.

V. 7. “Do as occasion serve thee.”—That is, “undertake in a bold manner whatever presents itself to thee.”

V. 8. “Gilgal,” *i.e.*, the place of that name near Jericho. (See chapter vii.)

V. 10. “To the hill.”—Rather to **“Gibeah.”**

V. 12. “But who is their father.”—This is a very obscure phrase. Amongst the explanations offered, the following seem the most probable.

- (i.) That by **“father”** we are to understand the “head” or leader of the prophets. Hence the passage would mean: What kind of a leader can these persons have, if they admit such a person as Saul, the son of Kish into their society?
- (ii.) That by **“father”** we are to understand **“God Himself.”** And thus the meaning would be: A kind of reproof to those who wondered at such an incident, knowing as they did, that the source of their spiritual life was God, who was able to give the same gift of prophecy to Saul as to others; though he was the son of Kish who was not a prophet. With this last we might well compare the astonishment of the people of Capernaum to the mighty works of Christ.

“Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?”—Matt. xiii., 55.

V. 14. “Saul’s uncle.”—Possibly Ner.

V. 17. “Mizpeh.”—See chapter vii.

V. 18. “Out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you.”—Rather “Out of the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed you.” The reference is clearly to the period of the Judges.

V. 19. “By your tribes, and by your thousands.”—The nation was divided into four divisions—tribes, families,

houses, persons. This was supplemented again by Moses, (Ex. xviii., 25,) into thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. The "**thousand**" therefore corresponded to the "**family**."

V. 20.—We are not told expressly by what process the selection was made, but probably by casting lots. Notice the following cases of lots being cast.

- (i.) The division of Canaan among the Israelites (Num. xxvi., 55 ; xxxiii., 54 ; Deut. i., 38).
- (ii.) The detection of offenders. Notice the case of Achan and Jonathan (Josh. vii., 14 ; 1 Sam. xiv., 42).
- (iii.) For the settlement of difficult questions generally (Prov. xvi., 33 ; xviii., 18 ; Acts i., 26).

V. 22. "Among the stuff."—Rather "**among the baggage**."

V. 25. "The manner of the kingdom."—This refers to the limited power of the King. It was a kind of "**Bill of Rights**."

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. What three signs did Samuel give to Saul by means of which he could judge the truth of the prophet's prediction ?

2. What did he say with regard to Gilgal ?

3. "The hill of God." What place is meant by this ? And give reasons.

4. Give the geographical position (as far as you can) of Rachel's sepulchre, (Gilgal, Mizpeh, Gibeah of Saul, Plain of Tabor. Mention events connected with each.

5. "Hath anointed thee." Explain all that you know of this rite.

6. "The garrison of the Philistines." Explain the passage.

7. What modern instruments correspond to the psaltery, the tabret, and the pipe ?

8. Quote Samuel's address to the people at Mizpeh.

9. "Whither went ye?" Who asked this question, and what was the answer ?

10. The name of Saul's uncle. What questions did he give to Saul?
11. What were Saul's qualities for the office of king? Was he elected unanimously by the people? If not, who objected?
12. To what tribe and family did Saul belong?
13. When and by whom were the following words spoken—
 - (i.) Do as occasion serve thee.
 - (ii.) Is Saul also among the prophets?
 - (iii.) Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you.
 - (iv.) How shall this man save us? *Discovers*

CHAPTER XI.

ANALYSIS.

Saul's victory over the Ammonites. He is again confirmed as King over Israel at Gilgal.

NOTES.

From chapter xii., 12, we must infer that this Ammonite attack was threatened even before Saul's election.

V. 1. "Nahash" (= *serpent.*)—King of the Ammonites. He could not be the same Nahash "who shewed kindness" to David (2 Sam. x., 2); but probably his father or grandfather.

"The Ammonite."—The Ammonites were the descendants of Ben-Ammi (= *the son of my nation*), one of the sons of Lot. Their territory lay on the eastern side of the Jordan, but its exact position is doubtful. Some suggest north of the river Arnon. They were a turbulent and fierce people. The chief notices of them in Bible history are: (1) they oppressed Israel in Jephthah's time; (2) their defeat by David (2 Sam. xii., 26); (3) their invasion of Judah in the reign of Jehoshaphat, when they were again repulsed (2 Chr. xx).

“Jabesh-Gilead” *i.e.*, (= *confusion, shame*) **in Gilead.**
—**Gilead** was a large district lying on the east side of the river Jordan, bounded on the north by Bashan, on the south and south-east by Moab and Ammon. It belonged to Manasseh. It must have now recovered from the terrible vengeance brought upon it by the Israelites, for not having joined them in the war against Benjamin. (Judges xxi.)

V. 2. The loss of the right eye would disable them for war, as the left eye would be covered by the shield. Notice the cutting of the thumbs and great toes mentioned in Judges i., 7-8.

V. 7.—Distributing the pieces of the two slaughtered oxen has been compared to an ancient Scotch method of mustering a clan, by sending round a cross of yew, first set on fire, and then quenched in the blood of a goat. It was thus an emblem of the fire and sword which awaited all who neglected the call.

V. 8. “Bezek” (= *lightning*).—This was probably a district rather than a town. Its exact position is unknown. But it is supposed to be halfway between Shechem and Bethshan, and seven miles west of Jordan. It was within a day’s march of Jabesh.

V. 11. “In the morning watch.”—The Jews divided the night into three watches, each watch representing the time for which sentinels remained on duty. The first watch began at sunset and ended at ten p.m.; the middle watch from ten p.m., till two a.m.; the morning watch from two a.m., till sunrise. The time thus indicated would be between two and six in the morning.

“Two of them were not left together.”—The Jabesh-Gileadites long remembered the services now rendered by Saul. For it was the men of Jabesh who rescued the bodies

of Saul and Jonathan from the walls of Bethshan, and gave them an honourable burial (xxxii., 11-14.)

V. 14. "Gilgal." (See chapter vii.)—That near Jericho is meant here.

"There they made Saul king."—This assembly would be a larger and more representative one than that at Mizpeh. And after such success as that against the Ammonites, those who for some reason or other objected to him before, would now be silenced.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. What was the name of the King of the Ammonites at this time? In what connection does the name occur in the subsequent history?
2. What were the conditions upon which the King of the Ammonites offered to conclude a treaty of peace with the people of Jabesh?
3. How did the Jabesh-Gileadites receive these conditions?
4. What was Saul doing, when he heard of the state of things at Jabesh? How did he receive the news?
5. State the manner in which he summoned the people to the assistance of their countrymen across the Jordan?
6. Quote the reply sent to Jabesh.
7. At what place did the people assemble before the attack upon the Ammonites? How far was it from Jabesh, and on which side of the Jordan?
8. What effect had Saul's victory over Nahash upon the people generally? And what reference is made to those who were opposed previously to Saul as king?
9. Where did the people assemble for the second time in order to renew their confidence in Saul?
10. What incident in the subsequent history proves the attachment and gratitude of the Jabesh-Gileadites to Saul?
11. Who were the Ammonites; and where was their territory? State what you know of them generally.
12. The geographical position of Gilgal, Bezek, and Jabesh-Gilead.
13. When and by whom were the following words spoken—
 - (i.) If there be no man to save us, we will come to thee.
 - (ii.) What aileth the people that they weep?
 - (iii.) For to-day the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel.

CHAPTER XII.

ANALYSIS.

Samuel's farewell address to the people. As a proof of the sincerity of his words, and in answer to his prayer, God causes it to thunder, though it was harvest time.

NOTES.

V. 3. "His anointed"—*i.e.* who was "the anointed of Jehovah." (x., i.)

The application of the term to Saul at this time makes it very probable that he had been publicly anointed by Samuel at Gilgal, in addition to that at Ramah.

V. 6. "Moses and Aaron."—Moses (*= saved out of the water*) was the younger son of Amram and Jochebed. Both his father and mother were of the tribe of Levi. He was the Great Leader, Deliverer, Prophet, and Lawgiver of Israel. **Aaron** (*= lofty*), was the elder son of Amram and Jochebed, and therefore brother of Moses. He was the first high-priest of the Jews. These two persons were therefore the instruments employed by God to lead His people Israel into the Promised Land, and thus deliver them from Egyptian bondage. Neither of them were allowed to enter Canaan.

V. 8. "Jacob" (*= supplanter*).—Otherwise called Israel. He was the younger of the twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah. The Israelites were descended from him. A large portion of the Book of Genesis is devoted to the history of Jacob. **"Egypt"** (*= that oppresses*). A country north-east of Africa. The common name of Egypt in the Bible is **"Mizraim,"** or **"the Land of Mizraim."**

V. 9. "Sisera" (*= field of battle*).—This was the name of the captain of the army of Jabin, king of Hazor.

“**Hazor**” (= *fort* or *castle*).—This was once the capital of the kingdoms of Northern Canaan. It was probably situated to the north-west of the waters of Merom.

“**Philistines**.”—See chapter iv. and Judges iii., 31, x., 7, xiii., 1.

“**King of Moab**.” That is, Eglon. (See Judges iii., 12-30.) Therefore we have here mentioned the three chief oppressors of Israel during the period of the Judges.

V. 10. “Baalim and Ashtaroth.”—See chapter vii.

V. 11. “Jerrubbaal” (= *let Baal plead*)—*i.e.* Gideon, who delivered the Israelites from the Midianite oppression (Judges vi.-viii). His name was changed from Gideon to Jerrubbaal for his bold act in destroying the altar of Baal (Judges vi., 31, 32).

“**Bedan**.”—This name is neither mentioned in the Book of Judges, nor elsewhere in Scripture. Various conjectures have been made from time to time as to the Judge who is here meant. Some commentators think he is **Barak**, others **Samson**, others **Abdon**, others **Jair**. However, the balance of opinion seems in favour of **Barak**; and in support of this it may be mentioned that the Hebrew word for **Barak** and **Bedan** are almost identical. It has also been explained as a contraction of **Ben-Dan**—*i.e.* son of Dan or Danite (hence the supposition that he was Samson).

“**Jephthah**” (= *liberator*).—He was a Gileadite; and routed the Ammonites (Judges xi). Noted in Bible History for his rash vow.

“**Samuel**.”—Some propose to read “**Samson**” instead of **Samuel** in this passage. And they base their opinion upon the list given in Heb. xi., 32. But that he should mention himself as one of the great Deliverers of Israel, is not in anyway improper, if we only consider the remarkable instance of God’s deliverance mentioned in chapter vii.

V. 14. Read thus :—

“If ye will fear Jehovah, and serve Him, and obey His voice, and not rebel against the Commandment of Jehovah, and both ye and also the King who reigneth over you continue following after Jehovah your God [it shall be well with you]. But if,”—&c.

The part in brackets is easily supplied from the context.

V. 17. “Wheat harvest.”—This was between May 15th and June 15th. Thunder and rain at this time of the year was most unusual ; for from the cessation of the showers in spring till their commencement in October or November rain is unknown.

V. 21. Read thus :—

“And ye shall not turn aside after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver.”

“Vain things.”—That is, false gods and idols.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Quote the words in which Samuel justified his conduct in all things during his judgeship.
2. How did he reprove the people for their ingratitude in rejecting God's government ?
3. In what terms did Samuel warn the people against disobedience ?
4. Which of the Judges are mentioned in this chapter ? In what connection are they mentioned ?
5. State what you know of Jacob, Moses and Aaron, so far as this chapter is concerned.
6. As a proof of the sincerity of his words, what sign did Samuel desire from God ? What was there unusual in it ?
7. Bedan. Who was he ? and give reasons for your answer.
8. Quote a verse in this chapter which shews Samuel's attachment to his fellow-countrymen.
9. How many times was Saul anointed King of Israel ? Give reasons for your answer.
10. Explain the allusions—
 - (i.) And they answered, He is witness.
 - (ii.) Is it not wheat harvest to-day ?

CHAPTER XIII.

ANALYSIS.

Saul gathers the people together to Gilgal in order to fight against the Philistines. Jonathan smites the garrison at Geba, which circumstance brought on another Philistine attack. The people are afraid. Saul, tired of waiting for Samuel, offers sacrifice. For this he is punished. The Philistine oppression.

NOTES.

V. 2. "Saul chose him three thousand men."—This was the natural result of the election of a king who was to be a military leader. He must have a standing army.

"Michmash" (= *treasure*).—This town was placed on a shelving ridge in the very middle of the mountains of Benjamin, and must have been a post of great strength and importance. Its site is now occupied by a village called **Mukkmas**, which is seven miles north of Jerusalem.

"Mount Bethel."—That is, the high ground between Bethel and Michmash.

"Gibeah of Benjamin."—Another name for Gibeah of Saul. It was situated four miles east of Mizpeh and about the same distance north of Jerusalem. (See Judges xix.)

V. 3. "Jonathan" (= *the gift of Jehovah*).—Saul's eldest son. Noted for his friendship with David.

"Smote the garrison of the Philistines."—For the word "garrison," see chap. x., 5.

"Geba" (= *a hill*).—A city of Benjamin. Whether this is the same as Gibeah of Benjamin it is impossible to determine. It was, however, not far from Michmash.

V. 4. "Gilgal."—See chap. vii.

V. 5. "Thirty thousand chariots."—Probably a mistake for three hundred.

"Beth-aven" (= *house of naught, i.e., idols*).—This was situated between Michmash and Bethel, and near Ai. Commanding the chief approach to the heart of the country from Gilgal; the position was a most important one.

In the prophet Hosea (iv., 15; v., 8; x., 5) the name **Beth-aven** is applied to Bethel by way of contempt, implying that the setting up of the golden calf at Bethel (= *the house of God*) had turned it into a Beth-aven (= *house of idols*).

V. 8. "And he tarried seven days."—The appointment referred to in this verse could hardly be the same as that in chap. x., 8. The latter was kept by Saul (see xi., 15). Most probably there were two occasions when an appointment was made, with an injunction that Saul should tarry seven days at Gilgal for Samuel.

V. 9. "And he offered the burnt offering."—There is a difference of opinion amongst commentators as to whether Saul offered the sacrifice himself or by means of a priest. It is very improbable that he would encroach upon the priest's office, seeing that Ahiah the priest was with him (xiv., 3). In addition to this, we find no reference to this encroachment even in Samuel's rebuke. Hence, if the above be right, Saul's sin consisted in disobeying Samuel's command.

V. 17. "Ophrah" (= *fawn*).—A city of Benjamin, supposed to be about four miles north-east of Bethel, in the **land of Shual** (= *jackal*). **Shual** is possibly the same as **Shalim** in chap. ix., 4. This must not be confounded with the Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

V. 18. "Beth-horon" (= *house of caverns*).—A place situated on the main pass from the hill country of Judæa into the plain of Philistia.

"The valley of Zeboim" (= *the ravine of hyenas*).—A ravine or gorge east of Michmash, *i.e.*, between the central district of Benjamin and the Jordan valley.

V. 19. "There was no smith throughout the land." In order to render their conquests permanent, the Philistines thought that the best policy to adopt was to deprive the Israelites of all the means of defence. The smiths had probably been carried away during former wars; just as the Chaldeans did to the Jews in the time of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxiv., 16); just as Cyrus did to the Lydians, and Porsenna to the Romans.

V. 20. The difference between the **share**, the **mattock**, and the **coulter** cannot be now ascertained.

V. 21. "To sharpen the goads."—The **goad** had a pointed end, which was used to lash and guide the oxen; the other end was a kind of chisel, used to clear away roots, &c., which choked the plough, and to clean off the earth and weeds from the ploughshare.

V. 22. The meaning of this verse is very obscure.

V. 23. "The passage of Michmash."—This was a steep and precipitous path leading from Michmash to Geba.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. How did Saul dispose of his "three thousand chosen men"?
2. Who was Jonathan? Give the meaning of the word; and state where he was stationed at this time.
3. How and when did Jonathan first distinguish himself?
4. After Jonathan's exploit, where did the people assemble at?
5. What effect had Jonathan's success upon the Philistines?

6. "Then did the people hide themselves in caves." What was the cause of this terror? In order to secure safety, some adopted a different course. What was it?

7. Give an account of Saul's first error. How was he reproved?

8. In order to harass the Israelites, what plan of action was adopted by the Philistines?

9. Prove from this chapter the complete subjection of the Israelites to the Philistines. How had this state of things come to pass?

10. Do you know of a similar state of things in the previous history of the Israelites?

11. Who alone of the people were allowed to carry arms?

12. Give the geographical position (if possible) of Michmash, Geba, Gilgal, Ophrah, Beth-horon, and Beth-aven.

13. Describe the country round Michmash, and give its modern name.

14. What is the general opinion with regard to Saul's first error? Give reasons for your answer.

15. Explain the allusions—

(i.) Let the Hebrews hear.

(ii.) And the rest of the people, he sent every man to his tent.

(iii.) Thou hast done foolishly.

(iv.) Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears.

CHAPTER XIV.

ANALYSIS.

Jonathan's exploit at Michmash. The defeat of the Philistines. Saul's oath, to which Jonathan is almost a victim. The people rush upon the spoil. An account of Saul's wars and family.

NOTES.

V. 2. "The uttermost part of Gibeah."—Here "Gibeah" seems to be the name of a district.

“**Migron**” (= *precipice*).—It is doubtful whether this is the same as that north of **Michmash**, and mentioned in Isai. x., 28.

V. 3. “Ahiah, the son of Ahitub.”—**Ahiah**, or, as it is sometimes written, “**Ahijah**” (= *the brother of Jah*), is supposed by some to be the same as **Ahimelech**, mentioned in chap. xxii., 9, and who was a victim to Saul’s great massacre of the priests at Nob. Others think that he was a brother of Ahimelech.

“**Ichabod**,” “**Phinehas**.”—See chap. iv. Thus Ahiah would be Eli’s great grandson.

“**The Lord’s priest in Shiloh.**”—This word clearly refers to Eli and not to Ahiah. For at this time Shiloh was not the religious centre of the nation.

“**Ephod**.”—See chap. ii.

V. 4. “Bozez” (= *shining*), “**Seneh**” (= *the acacia*).

V. 5. “Michmash.”—See chap. xiii.

V. 12. “We will shew you a thing,” *i.e.*, we will teach you a lesson.

V. 14. “Within as it were an half-acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow.”—Literally, “In about half a furrow of a yoke of land.” “**A yoke of land**” is supposed to be a piece of land which a yoke of oxen would be able to plough in one day. Thus, “**a furrow of a yoke of land**” would denote the length of one side of such a square piece of land. The meaning, therefore, appears to be that the garrison was destroyed in a short distance.

V. 18. “Bring hither the Ark of God.”—The Septuagint version reads :—

“And Saul said to Ahijah, Bring hither the **ephod**; for he bore the ephod in those days before the children of Israel.”

Hence, the question arises, whether we are to consider that the “Ark” or the “ephod” is meant. The balance of opinion seems in favour of the **ephod**. For the whole tenor of the history seems to point that the Ark remained at Kirjath-jearim till it was removed by David from there. Besides, the expression “**Bring hither**” is commonly applied to the ephod (xxiii., 9, xxx., 7), and not to the Ark.

V. 23. “Beth-aven.”—See chap. xiii.

V. 24. “That I may be avenged on mine enemies.” Nearly the same words as employed by Joshua during the Battle of Beth-horon; and in the very same valley (Josh. x., 13).

V. 27. “His eyes were enlightened,” *i.e.*, “He was refreshed.”

V. 31. “Aijalon” (= *a place of deer or gazelles*).—Sometimes written **Ajalón**. It is now called **Yalo**, which is about 14 miles out of Jerusalem. It gave its name to that valley which was the scene of the disastrous rout of the Amorites when at Joshua’s word “**the sun stood still and the moon stayed**” (Joshua x., 13).

V. 47. “For Moab and Ammon.”—See chap. xi.

“And against Edom” (= *red*).—The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, surnamed Edom (Gen. xxv., 30). They occupied Edom or Idumæa, previously called Mount Seir (= *rudd*), the mountainous district stretching from the southern end of the Dead Sea to the northern end of the Gulf of Elath.

“**Against the Kings of Zobah.**”—**Zobah** was probably a district situated between Damascus and the Euphrates.

V. 49. “Ishui.”—Generally supposed to be the same as **Abinadab**.

V. 50. “Abner, the son of Ner, Saul’s uncle.”—Grammatically, “**Saul’s uncle**” might refer either to **Abner** or **Ner**. But it is almost certain that it refers to **Ner**. Therefore Saul and Abner would be first cousins.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Who accompanied Jonathan on his daring adventure at Michmash?
2. Where was Saul at this time?
3. What relationship existed between Eli and Ahitub?
4. What do you know of Bozez and Seneh?
5. Upon what sign did Jonathan and his armour-bearer base their subsequent proceedings?
6. What was the success that attended Jonathan on this occasion?
7. When were similar words to those in verse 24 used?
8. How did the people show their respect and dread of the king?
9. What two results followed from Saul’s rash vow?
10. Who came to Jonathan’s rescue, when he had sinned against the royal curse?
11. Name Saul’s sons and daughters.
12. Prove from this chapter that Saul did his utmost to keep an efficient standing army.
13. What do you know of Edom, Aijalon, Ner, Ahiah, Ichabod.
14. Explain the allusions—
 - (i.) Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee.
 - (ii.) But he told not his father.
 - (iii.) For he hath wrought with God this day.
 - (iv.) Withdraw thine hand.
 - (v.) We will shew you a thing.

CHAPTER XV.

ANALYSIS.

Saul is commanded to destroy the Amalekites, but he chooses to save Agag, which thing displeased the Lord. He is, therefore, rejected as King of Israel. Samuel orders Agag to be brought before him, to be killed.

NOTES.

V. 2. "Amalek" (*= one that uses ill*).—Who the Amalekites originally were is a matter of doubt. Some suppose them to have been emigrants from the East; others that they were the descendants of Esau's grandson, Amalek (Gen. xxxvi., 12). They were bitter enemies of Israel. And they abode in the wilderness which lies south and south-west of Palestine, and stretches to the peninsula of Sinai.

They were the first who attacked Israel on their march to Sinai (Ex. xvii.). And though but few details are given of that incident, still from Dent. xxv., 17-19, and the present chapter, we can gather that they behaved in an atrocious manner. For this conduct they were, therefore, doomed to destruction, and the time had now come for the execution of that sentence.

V. 3. "Utterly destroy all . . . and spare them not."—Rather, "**devote to destruction**," &c. When anything was so devoted, it became a **cherem** (*= a devoted thing*. Lev. xxvii., 28-29), which means that which is cut off from common use. Thus, when a city became a **cherem**, everything living was doomed to destruction; the gold and silver and other valuables were appropriated to the service of the sanctuary; and no part of the spoil was to be

divided amongst the captors. Notice the case of Jericho and Achan's sin.

V. 4. "Telaim" (= *lambs*).—Nowhere else mentioned, unless it be **Telem** (Josh. xv., 24), south of Judah.

V. 5. "A city of Amalek."—By this is probably meant the city **Ir-Amalek** (= *the city of Amalek*).

V. 6. "The Kenites."—These were a branch of the Midianites. Their history is very much interwoven with that of the Israelites. Jethro, the priest of Midian and Moses' father-in-law, was a Kenite (Judg. i., 16). And it was probably the remembrance of the service done by Jethro and his son Hobab (Num. x., 29-32) to Israel, that prompted Saul to be kind to them now.

V. 7. "From Havilah until thou comest to Shur."—The **land of Havilah** (= *that suffers pain*) was supposed to have been on the south-eastern boundary of Palestine, and **Shur** (= *wall*) near the modern **Suez**. They were obviously at one time well-known land marks (Gen. xxv., 18).

The **expression itself** simply implies the direction of the pursuit, and not the distance.

V. 8. "Agag" (= *fiery*).—This was an hereditary title, similar to that of Pharaoh in Egypt.

V. 12. "Carmel" (= *park or garden*).—This was a city in the mountainous country of Judah, between seven and ten miles below **Hebron**, in a south-east direction. Its modern name is **Kurmul**. Here dwelt Nabal, whose widow became David's wife.—(See chap. xxv.)

"He set him up a place."—That is, "he erected a monument or trophy."

"Gilgal."—That near Jericho. See chap. vii.

V. 27. "The skirt of his mantle."—This must have been some kind of a flap hanging down behind, and which could easily be torn or cut off.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. What order was given to Saul concerning the Amalekites? And in what had he offended.
2. Where did Saul gather together his forces before the attack?
3. To whom did Saul show kindness during the war with the Amalekites? What reason had Saul for doing this?
4. Explain fully the phrase "utterly destroy." Give an instance of a city becoming "a cherem."
5. What do you know of the origin of the Amalekites and Kenites? State the part they inhabited.
6. What sin did Saul commit at this time and how was he punished?
7. Where did Samuel and Saul meet after the war was over?
8. What spoil did they spare from the war?
9. On whom did Saul try to throw the blame? Quote Samuel's answer to this attempt.
10. What token was given at this time, that the kingdom would be rent from Saul?
11. In what terms did Samuel declare to Saul that the sentence passed upon him could not be revoked?
12. By what act did Samuel show that he still remained Saul's friend?
13. What became of Agag?
14. Give the geographical position of Telaim, Shur, and Carmel, and relate events connected with each.
15. By whom and when were the following words spoken?
 - (i.) Blessed be thou of the Lord.
 - (ii.) Surely the bitterness of death is past.
 - (iii.) Say on.

CHAPTER XVI.

ANALYSIS.

David, the son of Jesse, is chosen as Saul's successor. He is anointed by Samuel. The feast at Bethlehem. Saul chooses David as his harpist.

NOTES.

V. 1. "Fill thine horn with oil."—In the case of Saul, "**a vial**" was used (chap x., 1), but in the case of David "**a horn**." In the small and brittle vial, we see an emblem of Saul's transient prosperity; but in the durable horn, we have an emblem of the more enduring character of the throne of David.

"Jesse, the Bethlehemite."—Jesse was the grandson of Ruth, the Moabitess, and belonged to the tribe of Judah through the line of his male ancestors.

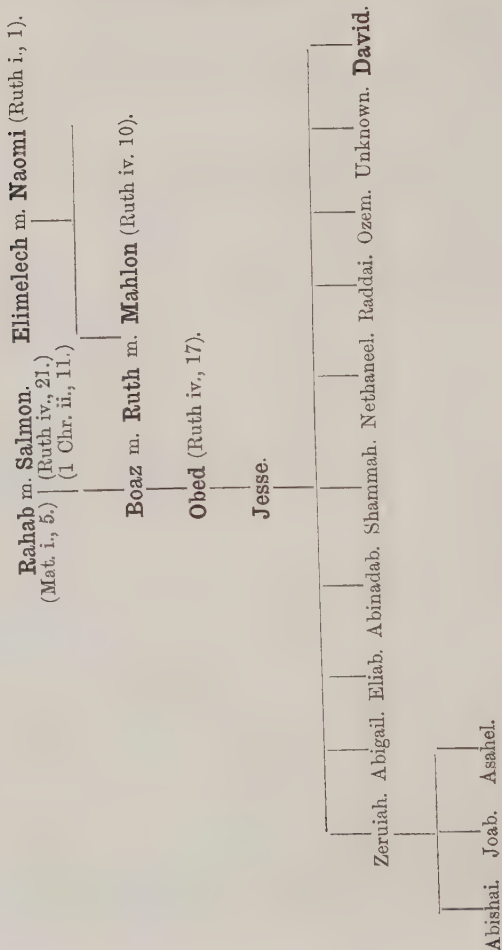
V. 2. "And the Lord said . . . say I am come." There is here an appearance of duplicity, sanctioned by divine authority. That secrecy was necessary is clear. For not only would Samuel's life be in danger, but also David's, if the object of the prophet's journey were known. Concealment of a good purpose for a good purpose is clearly justifiable. This kind of concealment has often to be exercised in war, medical treatment, and matters of state policy.

V. 4. Bethlehem (= *house of bread*).—A small town, situated about five miles south of Jerusalem, and a little to the east of the high road between Jerusalem and Hebron. In previous history it was called **Ephrath** (Gen. xlviii., 7), and its modern name is **Beit-lahm**. From David's connection with it, it is also called "**City of David**." Noted as the birthplace of Christ, and is, therefore, next to Jerusalem, the most sacred spot on earth.

V. 9. Shammah (= *astonishment*).—He is also called **Shimeah** (2 Sam. xiii., 3), **Shimea** (1 Chr. xx., 7), and **Shimma** (1 Chr. ii., 13).

V. 13. David (= *beloved* or *darling*).—The name was probably given as the youngest of the family.

DAVID'S PEDIGREE.



EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. To what place did the Lord send Samuel to anoint a successor to Saul ?
2. What objection did Samuel raise with regard to God's command, and how did God over-rule it ? Discuss the apparent duplicity.
3. Name Jesse's sons mentioned in this chapter, and trace David's pedigree. What relation would he be to Ruth ?
4. Where was David when Samuel asked of Jesse "Are here all thy children ?"
5. Describe David's appearance.
6. "An evil spirit from the Lord troubled Saul." What remedy was suggested ? *harp*.
7. Show that David's reputation was great even before he was introduced to Saul's Court.
8. When and by whom were the following words spoken ?
 - (i.) Send me David thy son which is with the sheep.
 - (ii.) Comest thou peaceably ? *Bethleem*
 - (iii.) I am come to sacrifice to the Lord.

CHAPTER XVII.

ANALYSIS.

David and Goliath. The victory which followed. Saul makes inquiries about David.

NOTES.

V. 1. "Shochoh" ($\doteq$ *defence*).—A town about sixteen miles south-west of Jerusalem, on the road to Gaza, and now called "**Shuweikeh**."

"Azekah" ($\doteq$ *strength of walls*).—This town was situated in the lowland of Judah, and had dependent villages. In addition to this incident, it is also noted as the place—

- (i.) Whither Joshua pursued the Canaanites after his victory at Beth-horon (Joshua x., 10).
- (ii.) Which was fortified by Rehoboam, Solomon's successor (2 Chron. xi., 9).

“Ephes-dammim” (= *boundary of blood*).—Called also **Pas-dammim** (1 Chron. xi., 13). It was situated about four miles north-east of Shochoh.

V. 2. “The valley of Elah” (= *teberinth*).—This is supposed to be the same as the present **“Wady-es-Sunt,”** which runs in a north-west direction from near Hebron to the sea-coast near Ashdod. The words, **“by the valley of Elah,”** ought to be read as **“in the valley of Elah.”**

V. 4. “A champion.”—Literally, **“a man between the two camps.”** It is, therefore, supposed that he was one who did not like an ordinary soldier, fight in the ranks, but went forth into the space between the two hostile camps, and challenged the mightiest man on the other side.

“Goliath” (= *exile*).—This giant would probably be a descendant of the Anakim, for in Joshua xi., 22, Gath is mentioned as one of the places which still retained a remnant of the sons of Anak.

V. 4. “Six cubits and a span.”—This would be about 10 feet. For the **cubit**, which is the distance from the elbow to the end of the middle finger, is generally supposed to be equivalent to 18 inches; and the **“span”**—the distance between the extremities of the thumb and little finger in an outstretched hand—would be about 9 inches.

V. 18. “Take their pledge,” *i.e.*, Bring back what they have to say in return.

V. 20. “The trench.”—Three interpretations might be given to this:—

- (i.) That it was a circular rampart round the camp.
- (ii.) That it was a bulwark formed by the baggage waggons round the camp.
- (iii.) That it was the place where the baggage waggons were kept.

V. 22. "David left his carriage." Rather "**baggage**" or "**stuff**."—The word **carriage**, which now signifies "that which carries" (*e.g.*, a cart or vehicle), at the time of the translation of the Ancient Version of the Bible, signified "that which was carried" (such as luggage, baggage, &c.). A similar meaning is given to the word in Acts xxi. 15.

"We took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem."

V. 25. "Make his father's house free."—This probably meant exemption from taxes, and all such services as are mentioned in chap. viii., 11-17.

V. 29. "Is there not a cause?"—This is an obscure passage. The probable meaning is, "Is it not a mere word?" *i.e.*, "May I not ask a harmless question?"

V. 52. "Shaaraim" (= *tempest*).—A town of Judah, but at this time probably in the hands of the Philistines. It was situated somewhere between Shochoh and Gath.

V. 54. "To Jerusalem."—Seeing that Jerusalem was as yet in the hands of the Jebusites, it is difficult to determine why it was chosen as the place to put the trophy of David's victory. Some suppose that it is here mentioned by anticipation, as afterwards it was placed at Jerusalem. Others suggest that it was placed at **Nob**, near Jerusalem, and therefore the writer chooses to mention the larger of the two places.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Give a short description of the neighbourhood in which the Philistines and Israelites met at this time.
2. What was Goliath's height? 10 1/2 ft.
3. To what is Goliath's "staff of the spear" compared?
4. Quote, in the words of the Bible, Goliath's challenge to the armies of Israel.
5. What effect had this challenge upon Saul?
6. What is said of Jesse in this chapter?
7. What brought David to the camp?

8. Which of Jesse's sons were in the army at this time?
9. Describe David's feelings when he heard the giant challenging the armies of Israel.
10. Quote Eliab's rebuke of David, and the answer which David gave.
11. What was the reward offered to him who should kill Goliath?
12. In what terms did David declare his readiness to fight Goliath? And how did Saul receive his offer?
13. How were both Goliath and David armed?
14. Quote Goliath's words to David, as they approached each other?
15. After the death of Goliath, what happened to the Philistines?
16. Where was Goliath's head taken? What difficulty is there with regard to this?
17. Who was Abner?
18. Explain the words "champion," "trench," and "carriage," as used in this chapter.
19. Geographical position of Shochoh, Azekah, Shaaraim.
20. Explain the allusions—
 - (i.) Whose son is this youth?
 - (ii.) Is there not a cause?
 - (iii.) Am I a dog?
 - (iv.) And take their pledge.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ANALYSIS.

Jonathan's attachment to David. Saul's jealousy. An attempt on David's life. Saul's treacherous offer of his daughter Merab to David. Michal, another daughter, becomes David's wife.

NOTES.

V. 10. "He prophesied in the midst of the house."
 It is very difficult to determine the exact meaning of this expression. Some say that he was in a state of frenzy, that he raved and made use of violent gestures, and uttered

incoherent imprecations. Others say that, in order to conceal his murderous designs upon David, he made a pretence of using devout ejaculations, and of praying in the midst of his family.

V. 17. "Merab" (= *increase*).—David had won the king's daughter previous to this, by his victory over Goliath; but Saul had not fulfilled his promise. This time she is offered with a treacherous design, Saul hoping that David in the meantime would fall a victim to the Philistines.

V. 19. "Adriel" (= *the flock of God*).—This was the son of Barzillai (2 Sam. xxi., 8).

"The Meholathite."—That is, one who dwelt at Meholah, which is probably the same as Abel-meholah, a town in the Jordan valley near Bethshan.

V. 27. "In full tale."—"Tale" means a number told or counted off; hence "reckoning."

V. 30. "Set by," *i.e.*, "esteemed."

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. What was the extent of Jonathan's love for David?
2. By what act did Jonathan give a proof of the depth of that love?
3. What circumstance first excited Saul's jealousy of David?
4. How did David behave himself in this trying time?
5. What was Saul's object in promoting David?
6. When Saul offered Merab to David for his wife, what conditions were attached to this offer?
7. Quote David's declaration of his unworthiness.
8. How did this agreement between Saul and David end?
9. Who was Adriel?
10. After thus the second time breaking his promise with David, what other offer did Saul make to him?
11. What were the conditions in this case, and how did it end?
12. Explain the allusions—
 - (i.) Saul became David's enemy continually.
 - (ii.) That she may be a snare to him.
 - (iii.) What can he have more than the kingdom?

CHAPTER XIX.

ANALYSIS.

Jonathan pleads with his father on David's behalf. But he is able only to reconcile them for a short time, for Saul attempts to take away David's life. By the aid of Michal his wife, David is enabled to escape. He seeks refuge with Samuel at Ramah. Saul again found among the prophets.

NOTES.

V 5. "He did put his life in his hand," *i.e.*, he willingly exposed himself to danger.

V. 6. "Saul swear."—Rashness in oaths was one of Saul's besetting sins.

V. 11. If the title of Psalm LIX. is to be relied on, we find that David was in danger, not only from Saul, but also from various ruffians, found amongst Saul's followers, and who prowled about the streets of Gibeah waiting for an opportunity to take his life.

V. 12. "Michal let David through a window."—So did Rahab to the spies at Jericho (Josh. ii., 15). Notice also Paul's escape from Damascus (Acts ix., 25; 2 Cor. xi., 33).

V. 13. "An image," literally **"The teraphim."**—These teraphim were the Penates or household images of the Israelites. There is no evidence that they were ever objects of worship; they seem to have been resorted to for oracular consultation. They were thus used by the Israelites (Zech. x., 2) and by the Babylonians (Ezek. xxi., 19-22). Notice those of Laban, stolen by Rachel; and also those in Michal's possession. The plural "teraphim" in this passage denotes a single image, in human form, of life-size.

V. 17. "He said unto me."—Compare with Michal's deceit that of Rahab (Josh. ii., 4.) and of the woman at Bahurim (2 Sam. xvii., 20.) Though Scripture is silent with regard to the approval or disapproval of such practices, still we must not take it for granted that necessity will justify a falsehood. In fact, from Lev. xix., 11, we find that it is a duty to tell the truth at all times.

V. 18. "Naioth" (= *dwellings*).—In all probability Naioth was the name of the collegiate residence of the prophets, in or just outside Ramah, founded and superintended by Samuel himself.

V. 22. "And came to a great well." Rather "to the great cistern."—This was some large well-known cistern lying between Gibeah and Ramah, at a place called **Sechu**, which is nowhere else mentioned.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Quote Jonathan's advice to David concerning Saul's intentions.
2. How did Jonathan plead with his father on David's behalf.
3. What was the result of Jonathan's pleading?
4. How did Michal aid David to escape his enemies? And how did she justify her actions to her father?
5. Mention other instances of similar escapes.
6. Can you justify Michal's conduct in any way?
7. Where did David go after his escape from Gibeah?
8. What important personage did he find there?
9. Relate what happened to the messengers sent to Naioth to bring David back to Saul.
10. What is Naioth supposed to be?
11. Explain the allusions—
 - (i.) What I see, that I will tell thee.
 - (ii.) He is sick.
 - (iii.) Let me go, why should I kill thee?

CHAPTER XX.

ANALYSIS.

David flees from Naioth to Ramah. Consults with Jonathan. They renew their covenant of friendship. Saul's intention concerning David is tested by Jonathan, during the feast of the New Moon. The unfavourable state of affairs is communicated to David. The two friends part.

NOTES.

V. 1. Notice in this verse the three questions asked by David. They virtually amount to an assertion of his innocence.

V. 5. "The new moon."—It is evident from Num. x., 10, that the new moon, or the first day of the lunar month, was to be celebrated with special sacrifices and blowing of trumpets. And it appears to have been customary for the king to entertain his principal officers at the festival. For allusions to the new moon festivals see 2 Kings iv., 23; Ps. lxxxi., 3; 2 Chr. ii., 4; xxxi., 3; Isai. i., 13-14; Col. ii., 16; Amos viii., 5, &c.

V. 6. "Then say."—It is difficult to say whether David really wanted to go to Bethlehem, or whether he considered this story as a justifiable deception to avoid exciting Saul's anger.

V. 14, 15. The rendering of these two verses is certainly doubtful. But the general sense is clear. Being convinced that David would succeed his father, and aware of the barbarous manner by which the first king of a new dynasty often tried to make his throne secure by murdering his predecessor's family, Jonathan therefore made David promise

that he at any rate would show kindness to Jonathan's posterity, both during his lifetime and after his death. David fulfilled his promise by showing kindness to Mephibosheth (2 Sam. ix., 1 ; xxi., 7).

V. 19. "The stone Ezel" (= *departure*).—This was probably some well-known stone near Saul's residence. It is not mentioned again, except possibly in verse 41.

V. 20. "I will shoot."—This sign was arranged in case they might not be able to have an interview ; for Jonathan was suspected as aiding David in his designs upon the throne. No suspicion would be excited by Jonathan carrying the bow—his favourite weapon.

V. 24. "Meat."—Literally "**bread**."

V. 30. "Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman." Literally "**Thou son of perverse rebellion**."—No greater shame could be cast on an Oriental than to reproach his mother or ancestors. But taking the two renderings together, the meaning seems to be, that Jonathan was stubborn even from his mother's womb.

V. 33. "Cast a javelin." Rather "**lifted his spear**" as in chap. xviii., 11.—He waved it in a threatening manner without actually casting it.

V. 40. "His artillery," *i.e.* "**instruments**."—Which therefore means his bow, arrows, and quiver.

V. 41. "Out of a place toward the south."—Literally "**from the side of the south**," and therefore from a hiding place to the south of the stone Ezel. The passage is irregular, but the above seems the most natural interpretation. Certainly one would have expected a similar description to that in verse 19.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. After Saul came to Naioth where did David betake himself ?
2. Quote as near as you can, in Bible words, Jonathan's answer to the three questions which David asked.
3. What plan was adopted in order to find out Saul's real intentions towards David at the time ?
4. What promise did Jonathan exact from his friend David ? Was it ever fulfilled ? If so, how ?
5. Quote any words in the chapter which set forth Jonathan's disinterested love towards David.
6. What sign was agreed upon between Jonathan and David in order that the latter might know how things had turned out during the feast ?
7. Why was this sign determined upon more than any other ?
8. Quote Jonathan's pathetic language when he departed from David.
9. Explain (1) Cast a javelin (2) his artillery.
10. What do you know of the "stone of Ezel?"
11. When and by whom were the following words spoken ?
 - (i.) There is but a step between me and death.
 - (ii.) Go find out the arrows.
 - (iii.) Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman.
 - (iv.) Make speed, haste, stay not.
 - (v.) Who shall tell me ?

CHAPTER XXI.

ANALYSIS.

David goes to Nob, and obtains hallowed bread from Ahimelech, the High-priest; also Goliath's sword. From Nob he escapes to Gath, where for safety he is obliged to act like a madman.

NOTES.

V. 1. "**Nob**" (= *high place*).—From what is here mentioned and that in chapter xxii., 19, it is clear that Nob

was a city of the priests, and the High-priest resided there. The tabernacle also was pitched here. Its exact site is not known. But it is generally supposed to be situated on some eminence near Jerusalem, and within sight of the city.

“Ahimelech” (= *brother of a king*).—The son of Ahitub, and grandson of Phinehas, the son of Eli. (See chap. xiv., 3.)

V. 2. “The King hath commanded me a business.”—Another instance of deceit. And the consequences of this were disastrous. (See chapter xxii., 17-19.)

V. 4. “Common.”—Literally “**profane or unholy**,” *i.e.* unconsecrated.

V. 6. “The shewbread.”—Literally “**the bread of the Presence**.” It was so called because it was solemnly placed as an offering in the Presence of Jehovah. It consisted of **twelve loaves**—corresponding with the number of the tribes of Israel—which were placed hot every Sabbath-day by the Priests upon the golden table of the Sanctuary before the Lord; the stale loaves which had been there during the week, were removed and eaten by none but the Priests. (Lev. xxiv., 5-9.)

From this incident Christ—when his disciples were accused of doing that which was not lawful, on the Sabbath day, as they went through a cornfield—was able to enforce the great Evangelical principle that the ceremonial law, however rigid, must give way before the claims of suffering humanity. (Matt. xii., 3-4; Mark ii., 25-26; Luke vi., 3-5. In St. Mark, through an accidental error, the high priest is called Abiathar.

V. 13. “Scrabbled on the doors.”—*i.e.*, Scratched or made marks.

V. 15. “Come into my house.”—*i.e.*, “Be taken into my service.”

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. How did David persuade Ahimelech to give him the shewbread and the sword of Goliath? *Sam. vi.*
2. Was Ahimelech justified in giving David on this occasion the shewbread?
3. What was the shewbread, and what was the law with regard to it?
4. Who was Doeg?
5. Where did David go from Nob?
6. Describe David's conduct when he found that the servants of Achish knew him.
7. How did Achish address his servants respecting David's conduct?
8. Where is Nob and Gath?
9. When and by whom were the following words spoken?
 - (i.) Why art thou alone and no man with thee?
 - (ii.) The king hath commanded me a business.
 - (iii.) Did they not sing one to another of him in dances.
 - (iv.) Lo, you see the man is mad.

CHAPTER XXII.

ANALYSIS.

David at the cave of Adullam. His relations and many others join him there. He places his father and mother in charge of the King of Moab. The massacre of the priests. Abiathar alone escapes, and he seeks refuge with David.

NOTES.

V. 1. "The cave Adullam" (= *justice of the people*). Rather "**the cave of Adullam.**"—Adullam was the name of a town of Judah, the exact site of which has not been identified. It must have been somewhere in or near the valley of Elah (Josh. xii., 15; xv., 35). It is generally supposed to have been about eight miles east of Eleutheropolis, the modern Beit-Jibrin.

V. 3. "Mizpeh of Moab."—Mentioned only here. It is generally supposed to have been situated in the mountains of Pisgah, north of the river Arnon.

V. 4. "In the hold."—"Hold" is here equivalent to "stronghold" or "fortress." It seems to refer to the Mizpeh of v. 3.

V. 5. "The prophet Gad" (= *good fortune*).—Mentioned here for the first time. He was the person who was sent to offer David his choice of punishments for his sin in numbering the people (2 Sam. xxiv., 11).

"The forest of Hareth" (= *cutting*).—Not mentioned elsewhere. It was in Judah, probably two or three miles east of **Keilah**.

V. 20. "Abiathar," (= *father of plenty*).—Mentioned here for the first time. He continued David's friend throughout his reign, but offended by taking Adonijah's part against Solomon (1 Kings i., 7, 19, 42), and in consequence was deprived of the High-priesthood (1 Kings ii., 26-27). Owing to some error, he is in 2 Sam. viii., 17, and 1 Chr. xxiv., 6, made the father instead of the son of Ahimelech; and in Mark ii., 26, he is spoken of as the High-priest who gave David the shewbread.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Whence did David betake himself from Gath?
2. Who joined him at the cave of Adullam?
3. To whose charge did he entrust his father and mother?
4. What were Gad's instructions to him at this time?
5. Who informed Saul of what had occurred between David and Ahimelech at Nob? *Doel.*
6. When accused of conspiracy, what was Ahimelech's reply to Saul?
7. What was the sentence passed upon Ahimelech, and who was commissioned to carry it out?

8. Did any one escape from this massacre? If so, who?
9. Where are the following places supposed to have been situated? The cave of Adullam, Mizpeh of Moab, the forest of Hareth.
10. What other places are mentioned in this chapter, and in what connection?
11. Give the substance of Saul's complaint of the faithlessness of his servants.
12. Explain the allusions—
 - (i.) Abide not in the hold.
 - (ii.) Hear now, thou son of Ahitub.
 - (iii.) I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house.
 - (iv.) Did I then begin to inquire of God for him?

CHAPTER XXIII.

ANALYSIS.

David rescues Keilah from the Philistine marauders. Being informed by God that the Keilites would deliver him up to Saul, he escapes to the wilderness of Ziph. Jonathan comes to him for the last time. The Ziphites also are anxious to see him in Saul's power. But he is rescued by the invasion of the Philistines. He goes and dwells at En-gedi.

NOTES.

V. 1. "Keilah" (= *fortress*).—A fortified city in the lowland district of Judah (Josh. xv., 44), and bordering on the Philistine plain. It is represented by modern "**Kila**," a site with ruins, on the lower road from Beit-Jibrin to Hebron.

"They rob the threshing floors."—This clearly indicates the time of the year when the raid took place, viz., immediately after harvest.

V. 3. "Here in Judah."—Judah is here used in a limited sense for the highlands of Judah. For Keilah belonged to the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv., 44.)

V. 11. "The men of Keilah," *i.e.*, The chief men of the city, the representatives of the people.

V. 14. "In a mountain."—Probably the "**hill of Hachilah**," mentioned in v. 19.

"In the wilderness of Ziph," (*= borrowed.*)—This was a hilly district lying south-east of Hebron. The district derived its name from an isolated hill, about 100 feet high, three miles south of Hebron, and which is still called "**Tell Zif**."

V. 19. "The hill of Hachilah" (*= dark*).—The exact site cannot be identified with any certainty. But it is supposed to be the same as a hill now called "**Hakin**" or "**Yekin**," situated to the north-east of Ziph.

"Jeshimon" (*= waste or desert*).—This is not a proper name. It simply denotes the district on which the plateau of Ziph looks down. Therefore, from **Tell Zif**, the Ziphites would be able to watch David's movements in the district below.

V. 24. "In the wilderness of Maon" (*= place of residence*).—This was a barren district, which took its name from the town "**Maon**," situated on a hillock in the mountainous district south-east of Hebron. The name Maon still remains, the hill being known at the present time as "**Main**." Maon was also the home of Nabal (xxv., 2).

V. 28. "Sela-hammahlekoth" (*= the rock of escapes, or the rock of divisions*).—So called, either from Saul being divided from David, or from his being distracted, not knowing whether to pursue David or meet the Philistines.

V. 29. "En-gedi" (= *the fountain of the kid*).—This was situated about half-way along the western shore of the Dead Sea. It is now called "**Ain-Jidy**." The name was derived from a fountain which stands near the shore, some 400 feet above the plain. Its original name was "**Hazezon-Tamar**" (= *pruning of the palm*). See Gen. xiv., 7; 2 Chr. xx., 2. The country round En-gedi was on all sides full of caverns, which served as lurking places for outlaws; Even those of the present day take advantage of it.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Mention a passage which points out the time of the year when this Philistine raid upon Keilah took place.
2. Was the proposition to attack the Philistines at Keilah well received by David's men? What was their reply?
3. "David enquired of the Lord." How?
4. What was the result of this attack upon the Philistines?
5. What did Saul say when he heard that David was at Keilah?
6. Quote words which show that Keilah was a fortified town.
7. How did David escape from Keilah, seeing that the men of Keilah were in league with Saul?
8. Where did he go from there? Who came to him at this time?
9. Who were the Ziphites? Were they favourable or not to David's cause? Give reasons for your answer.
10. "For Saul and his men compassed David." How did David escape at this time?
11. In what connection does the word Sela-hammahlekoth occur, and what does it mean?
12. Give David's next place of refuge. State all that you know of it.
13. The geographical position of Keilah, Wilderness of Ziph, Maon, Engedi.
14. What Psalm is supposed to refer to the treachery of the Ziphites? Quote a verse which might refer to the incident.
15. By whom and when were the following words spoken?
 - (i.) Blessed be ye of the Lord; for ye have compassion on me.
 - (ii.) Arise, go down to Keilah.
 - (iii.) Thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ANALYSIS.

David at En-gedi. Saul, with 3,000 men, pursues him. David, though he could have taken Saul's life, is satisfied with cutting off the king's skirt. Saul, when told of this act of kindness, repents, and makes David promise that he would be kind to his posterity.

NOTES.

V. 2. "Upon the rocks of the wild goats."—They are so called because they were so precipitous that they were scarcely accessible except to the ibex and chamois. Wild goats still abound on the heights above Ain-Jidy.

V. 3. "Sheepcotes,"—i.e., Places of shelter for sheep.

V. 9. "Wherefore hearest thou men's words."—David was quite aware that there were flatterers at Saul's court who were continually inflaming the King's mind against him, through false accusations. It is said that Psalm vii. refers to this period of David's life. For notice how closely verses 3, 4, 8, 9 of the Psalm resemble the incidents recorded in verses 10, 11, 15 of this chapter.

V. 13. The meaning of this proverb is clearly the same as the principle laid down by Christ in Matt. xiii., 16-20, viz. that a man's character is known by his actions.

V. 15. Some think that Psalm xxxv., was written about this time.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. When Saul went in pursuit of David at En-gedi, how many men did he take with him?
2. What happened to Saul at this time?

3. What reason did David give to his men for not taking advantage of Saul's helpless position at this time?

4. To what did David attribute Saul's ill-feeling towards him?

5. In what terms did he prove his innocence to Saul, and by what proverb did he illustrate it?

6. On what occasion were similar words to the proverb quoted by David used in the New Testament?

7. To what did David compare "Saul's pursuit of him?"

8. Quote the words in which Saul confessed his fault.

9. What remarkable confession did Saul make at this time?

10. And what promise did he require of David? Did David agree to it?

11. Quote passages from the Psalms which have reference to incidents in this chapter.

12. By whom were the following words spoken, and with what meaning?

(i.) Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee.

(ii.) My Lord the King.

(iii.) Yet thou huntest my soul to take it.

(iv.) Thou art more righteous than I.

CHAPTER XXV.

ANALYSIS.

Samuel's death and burial. Nabal's conduct towards David. To prevent a quarrel, Abigail, Nabal's wife, takes presents to David. This pleases David. Nabal's death. David marries the widow Abigail.

NOTES.

V. 1. "Wilderness of Paran."—This must be used in a wide sense here, for the tract of country which extended from the borders of the wilderness of Sinai to the wilderness of Beersheba and the mountains of Judah. For from verse 2

we see that the scene of the incidents recorded in the chapter is laid in the neighbourhood of Maon, which was in the hill country of Judah. The Septuagint, with greater probability, reads Maon. But taking the above interpretation, the change is unnecessary.

V. 2. "Maon." See chap. xxiii.

"Carmel" (= *fruitful field*).—This must not be confounded with Mount Carmel on the west of the plain of Esdraelon. This was in the neighbourhood of Maon, in Judah. (See xx., 12.)

V. 3. "Nabal . . . of the house of Caleb."—Nabal (= *fool*) was therefore a descendant of Caleb, whose territory lay round Hebron (Josh. xv., 13.)

V. 7. "Thou hast shearers."—The time of sheep-shearing was and is still a time of festivity. And David's demand was not in any way unjust. Having done Nabal real service, he was entitled to recompense in some form or other.

V. 13. "The stuff," *i.e.*, baggage. (See chap. xvii., 20-22.)

V. 17. "Such a son of Belial," *i.e.*, such an evil man.

V. 18. "Two hundred loaves."—These would answer to our cakes, the ordinary bread of the East being thin and small.

"Two bottles of wine."—These bottles would be leathern vessels, made of the entire skin of an animal, and capable of holding many gallons.

"Parched corn," *i.e.*, new unripe corn roasted. It was considered an agreeable repast. Five measures would be one hundred pints.

"Clusters of raisins," *i.e.*, cakes of dried grapes.

"Cakes of figs," *i.e.*, figs dried and compressed.

V. 20. "The covert of a hill."—Probably a defile or glen between two hills.

V. 21. "Pertained unto him," *i.e.*, "belonged to him."

V. 26. Render thus:—

"And now my lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth,
it is the Lord **that** hath withholden thee from coming
into blood-guiltiness and from **saving** thyself with
thine hand; **and** now **all** thine enemies **shall be as**
Nabal, and (so shall) **all** that seek evil to my lord."

In this Abigail affirms that it is God—through her as an instrument—who has restrained David from committing a great crime.

V. 29. "Bound in the bundle of life."—Everything important or valuable is in the East called a "**Kattu**," or "**bundle**." If a judge were considered just and upright in his decision, it would be said of him "**he is bound up in the bundle of justice**." If anyone was strict with regard to his caste, of him it would be said "**he is bound up in the bundle of high caste**."—Hence by this expression Abigail intends to shew both the value and security of David's life.

V. 37. "He became as a stone," *i.e.*, he had a fit of apoplexy, in which he continued for ten days.

V. 43. "Took."—The meaning most probably is "**Had taken**." For in the list of David's wives in 2 Sam. iii., 2; 1 Chr. iii., 1, Ahinoam stands first.

"Jezreel" (= *seed of God*).—A city in the mountains of Judah, near Carmel and Juttah (Josh. xv., 56). This must not be confused with the well-known city of Samaria, which gave its name to the "Plain of Esdraelon."

V. 44. "Phalti" (= *deliverance of the Lord*).—Also called Phaltiel (2 Sam. iii., 15). He was afterwards compelled to give Michal back to David.

“**Gallim**” (= *fountains*).—Only mentioned here and Isai. x., 30, where it appears to be a city of Benjamin, and to be in the neighbourhood of another town called Laish, from which it may be presumed Phalti’s father derived his name.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. What evidence is there that Samuel was highly esteemed by the people?
2. Where did Nabal’s possessions lie?
3. What does the word Nabal mean? Give the name of his wife.
4. Give a description of both Nabal and his wife.
5. What was David’s message to Nabal? Can you justify his claim?
6. Give Nabal’s reply to David’s message.
7. What character do the servants give to Nabal, their master?
8. Enumerate Abigail’s presents to David, and state the effect this had upon David’s mind.
9. State the character given by Abigail to David.
10. Quote the admirable language employed by Abigail for the purpose of pacifying David.
11. In what terms did David address Abigail after his remarkable introduction?
12. When Abigail told her husband the great risk he had run in thus treating David, what was the result?
13. How long did Nabal linger in his illness?
14. By what act did Saul show his final rupture with David?
15. Give the geographical position of Carmel, Maon, Gallim, and Jezreel.
16. Explain—
 - (i.) Bound in the bundle of life.
 - (ii.) The covert of a hill.
 - (iii.) Such a son of Belial.
17. By whom were the following words spoken, and with what meaning?
 - (i.) Them shall he sling out as out of the middle of a sling.
 - (ii.) For as his name is, so is he.
 - (iii.) For we come in a good day.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ANALYSIS.

Saul, informed by the Ziphites of David's hiding place, pursues him at the hill of Hachilah. But he himself falls into David's hands. David contents himself by taking the King's spear and a cruse of water. Abner is reproved for his carelessness. Saul again acknowledges his fault.

NOTES.

V. 1. For "**Hachilah**" and "**Jeshimon**," see chap. xxiii.

V. 6. "**Ahimelech the Hittite**."—Not mentioned elsewhere. The Hittites were the descendants of Heth, the second son of Canaan. They occupied Kirjath-Arba afterwards called Hebron, in the days of Abraham (Gen. xxiii., 2).

"**Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab**."—**Abishai** (= *father of gifts*) and **Joab** (= *Lord father*) are for the first time mentioned here. But we often hear of them after this during David's reign. Zeruiah was David's sister. Abishai distinguished himself also by saving David's life in one of his Philistine wars (2 Sam. xxi., 17); he shared with his brother Joab, the command of David's army (2 Sam. x., 10); he and Joab were implicated in Abner's murder (2 Sam. iii., 30); they both remained faithful to David during Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. xvi., xviii.).

V. 7. "**Within the trench**," *i.e.*, within the enclosure formed by the baggage piled up as a defence.

V. 25. "**Saul returned to his place**," *i.e.*, "Gibeah."

GENERAL.—The striking resemblance between the narrative of this chapter and many points in chapters xxiii., 19, and xxiv., 22, has led some to suppose that chapter xxvi. is only a more detailed account of the same event. A few resemblances and differences might be mentioned. They resemble each other in the following points :—

- (i.) The first verse of chap. xxvi. is all but identical with versè 19, chap. xxiii.
- (ii.) The position occupied by David is the same both in chap. xxiii., 19, 24, and chap. xxvi., 1-3.
- (iii.) The fact of Saul and David being on the same hill at the same time. See chap. xxiii., 26, and chap. xxvi., 3.
- (iv.) The number of Saul's army on both occasions, viz., 3,000, is the same. See chap. xxiv., 2, and xxvi., 2.
- (v.) David's generous refusal to take Saul's life. See chap. xxiv., 6, and xxvi., 9, 11.
- (vi.) Saul's avowal of his conviction of David's future greatness. See chap. xxiv., 20, and xxvi., 25.

They differ in the following points.

- (i.) The scene of the interview is different in each case. In chap. xxiv., it is the cave at Engedi. In chap. xxvi., it is the camp at Hachilah.
- (ii.) The circumstances differ. From chapter xxiv., we find that it was by accident that Saul got into David's power. But from chapter xxvi., we find a deliberate plan to enter the camp.
- (iii.) In chapters xxiii., xxiv., we have no mention of names of persons who aided David ; in chapter xxvi., we have.
- (iv.) Between what is recorded in chapter xxiii. and xxiv., there is an account of a Philistine raid, which prevented Saul from carrying on his pursuit. In chapter xxvi., there is no mention of such a thing.

It is difficult to decide which view is right, but on close examination the differences seem to outweigh the resemblances. The student will do well to carry out his comparison further, and decide for himself.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Name the people who gave information to Saul concerning David ?
2. Who was Zeruiah ? Name her sons, and mention some incidents in their subsequent history.
3. What reason did David give to Abishai for not taking Saul's life when he had the opportunity ?
4. What was taken from him on this occasion ?
5. How did David address Abner for his negligence in keeping guard ?
6. In what terms did Saul answer David's protest against the king pursuing such an innocent subject ?
7. What opinions are held with regard to the narrative as recorded in this chapter ? On what are these opinions based ?
8. Explain "within the trench."
9. Who spoke the following words ?
 - (i.) Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp ?
 - (ii.) Let us smite him, I pray thee.
 - (iii.) Who art thou that criest to the king ?
 - (iv.) Art not thou a valiant man ?

CHAPTER XXVII.

ANALYSIS.

David again seeks a refuge amongst the Philistines. He comes to Achish, king of Gath, and is allowed to reside at Ziklag, from which place he makes several successful raids upon the neighbouring tribes.

NOTES.

V. 2. "Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath."—Whether this Achish is the same as the king of Gath mentioned in chap. xxi., 10, is a matter of doubt. It may be that Achish is an official title. Thus this Achish would probably be a successor to the one in chap. xxi.

V. 6. "Ziklag" (= *outpouring of a fountain*).—The exact site of this town has not been identified. But it was most probably somewhere west or north-west of Beersheba. The narrative in chap. xxx., 9-21, places it in the south of Judah. It originally belonged to Judah (Josh. xv., 31), but was afterwards transferred to Simeon (Josh. xix., 5.) Whether it was ever occupied by the Israelites before this is uncertain.

"Unto this day."—This addition of the writer seems to indicate that the Book was written after the separation of the Kingdom of Judah from that of Israel, and the expression "Kings of Judah" gives additional force.

V. 8. "The Geshurites."—These were a people who dwelt south of the Philistine territory.

"The Gezrites."—These were probably an ancient Arab tribe which at one time wandered up northwards, and gave its name to Mount Gerizim. They could not have been the inhabitants of Gezer, for this place was far away from the scene of David's operations.

"Amalekites."—See chap. xv.

"Shur" (= *a wall*).—See chap. xv., 7.

V. 10. "Have ye made a road?" *i.e.*, have ye made a plundering excursion?—Compare with this use of the word "road," the compound "**in-road**."

"The Jerahmeelites."—These were the descendants of Jerahmeel, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah (1 Chron. ii., 9-25), and they inhabited the southern frontier of Judah.

"The Kenites."—See chap. xv., 6.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. What course did David take in order to escape out of Saul's power? How many men had he at this time?
2. What request did David make of Achish? Was it granted? If so, in what manner?
3. How long did David remain in the land of the Philistines?
4. What passage in this chapter indicates the time of writing the First Book of Samuel?
5. To whose territory did David make incursions from Ziklag?
6. Relate the manner in which David behaved towards these tribes during these incursions. What reason did he give for his conduct?
7. Where is Ziklag supposed to have been situated?
8. Explain the allusions—
 - (i.) Whither have ye made a road to-day?
 - (ii.) For why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ANALYSIS.

David forced to be an ally of the Philistines, who pitch their camp at Shunem. The Israelites are stationed in Gilboa. Saul resorts to the Witch of Endor. Samuel appears and pronounces Saul's doom. Saul, being weary and hungry, is entertained by the witch.

NOTES.

V. 2. "Keeper of mine head," *i.e.*, Captain of my body-guard.

V. 3. "Ramah."—See chap. i.

“Saul had put away.”—When he did this is not known. It was probably at the commencement of his reign.

“Wizards,” *i.e.*, “The knowing ones.”—Those who are supposed by mysterious means to predict the future.

V. 4. “Shunem” (*= their sleep*).—This was situated at the south-western base of Little Hermon, about three miles north of Jezreel, and five miles from Gilboa. It is now called **Solam**. Shunem is also mentioned as the home of the woman who entertained Elisha (2 Kings iv., 8).

“In Gilboa” (*= bubbling of a fountain*).—**Gilboa** was a mountainous tract on the south-east of the plain of Esdraelon (or Jezreel). The ancient name still remains in the village of **Jelbon**, situated on the south side of the mountains.

V. 6. “By dreams,” *i.e.*, an immediate revelation to himself.

“By Urim,” *i.e.*, an answer through the High-priest, clothed in the ephod.

“By prophets.”—An answer conveyed through some seer speaking by the word of the Lord.

“Urim and Thummim.”—The student will do well to consider the following note in connection with the obscure question, What was the Urim and Thummim? From Ex. xxviii., 30, we gather that the **Urim** (*= light*) and **Thummim** (*= perfection*) denote certain material objects placed inside the breastplate of Judgment which formed part of the High-priest's ephod. By means of these, in some way unknown to us, the High-priest was enabled to ascertain the wish of Jehovah. Some identify them with the twelve stones inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes, and suppose that the

illumination, simultaneous or successive, of the letters guided the High-Priest to the answer; others think that within the breast-plate was a stone or a plate of gold inscribed with the name Jehovah, and that by means of this he was enabled to discern the Divine Voice as it proceeded from the glories of the Shechinah.

V. 7. "A woman that hath a familiar spirit,"—literally, "a mistress of the **Ob** or ventriloquial spirit"—a Pythoness, as the Greeks called her. The word **Ob** means a **skin bottle**, and therefore has reference to the distension of the body of the ventriloquist.

"Endor" (= *the fountain of habitation.*)—This was situated seven or eight miles from Gilboa, and stood at the north-east corner of Little Hermon, three or four miles from Tabor, which stands opposite to it. The ancient name of **Endor** is still preserved, and many dismal caverns are to be seen in the neighbourhood, one of which must have been the scene of this incident.

V. 13. "Gods."—As from verse 14 we find that only one appeared, we must understand by this word "**gods**," one of godlike form. It is rare to see the word "**Elohim**" which we have here in the original, thus applied.

V. 18. "Amalek."—See chapter xv.

V. 19. "With me," *i.e.*, In Sheôl or Hades, the abode of the departed spirits, of righteous and wicked alike.

V. 20. "All along."—Better, "his full length."

GENERAL.—There are various opinions with regard to this mysterious incident at Endor, between Saul and the witch. The questions debated are:—

- (i.) Was there a supernatural appearance *at all*, or was the whole affair an imposture?

- (ii.) If there was a supernatural appearance,
- (a) Was it *really Samuel* who appeared and spoke ;
was it an evil spirit counterfeiting the form of
Samuel, or was it a mere *spectral illusion* ?
- (b) By what agency or power was it brought about ?

In considering these questions, the following points may be observed :—

- (i.) The obvious tendency of the narrative is to the hypothesis of *some kind of apparition*.
- (ii.) That the spirit of Samuel himself appeared is attested by
- (a) The original text of verse 14, which is—
“And Saul perceived that it was Samuel *himself*.”
“himself” being omitted in our translation.
- (b) The woman’s surprise and alarm. She did not expect such an apparition.
- (c) Saul’s acknowledgment of the reality of the appearance (verse 14), and the suitableness of the answer given to Saul (verses 16-19).
- (d) Nearly all the early Christian writers. The ancient Jewish Church. The Author of the Book Ecclesiasticus, who says of Samuel—
“After his death he prophesied, and showed the king his end.”—Ecclus. xlvii., 20.
- (iii.) His appearance must not be regarded as the result of the witch’s incantations. God sent the spirit of His servant to confound the witch and to punish the king, and pronounce final sentence on him for his sins.
- (iv.) To suppose that the appearance was the result of Satanic influence, would be imputing miraculous powers to the devil, and it would also represent Satan as divided against himself.

However, the opinion of the majority of commentators, both ancient and modern, is that Samuel was really allowed by God to appear to give to Saul his last warning and predict his defeat and death.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Quote David's evasive answer to Achish, when told he should have to fight against his own countrymen
2. What position was David to hold ?
3. When is it supposed that Saul suppressed witchcraft ?
4. Give the respective positions of the Philistine and Israelitish armies at this time.
5. When Saul saw the hosts of the Philistines, what effect had it upon his mind ?
6. Explain the difference between God appearing (1) by dreams, (2) Urim, (3) by prophets.
7. What opinions are held with regard to the "Urim and Thummim ?" Give the meaning of the words.
8. What did Saul do, when he found that God had forsaken him ?
9. In what terms did the witch of Endor first address Saul ?
10. What was Saul's answer to the question, "Why hast thou disquieted me ?"
11. What effect had Samuel's prediction upon Saul ?
12. How was Saul entertained by the woman, after the incident of Samuel's appearance was over ?
13. Where are Endor, Gilboa, Shunem, and Ramah ?
14. State the various opinions held with regard to this mysterious incident at Endor.
15. When and by whom were the following words spoken —
 - (i.) I have put my life in my hand.
 - (ii.) To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me.
 - (iii.) I saw gods ascending out of the earth.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ANALYSIS.

The Philistine lords distrust David. Therefore he and his company are commanded to leave the army, and return to Ziklag.

NOTES.

V. 1. "Aphék" (= *fortress*).—It is doubtful whether this is the same as that mentioned in chap. iv., 1. If not the same, then it must be sought for in the neighbourhood of Jezreel. It, however, must seem strange that the Philistine lords should have allowed David and his men to accompany them so far north as Jezreel, and then to turn them back.

"By a fountain which is in Jezreel."—This fountain is generally supposed to have been about two miles east-south-east of Jezreel, and it is not very improbable that it was the same as the "spring of Harod," at which Gideon tested his men (Judges vii., 1).

"Jezreel" (= *God soweth*).—Its modern name is **Zerin**. This was situated in the plain of the same name between Little Hermon and Gilboa. It was the favourite residence of Ahab (1 Kings xxi., 1); here was enacted the tragedy of Naboth's judicial murder (1 Kings xxi., 13); and here Jezebel met with her sad end (2 Kings ix., 30).

V. 2. "The rereward," *i.e.*, rear-guard.

V. 3. "Hebrews."—See chap. iv., 6.

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Where were the Philistines and Israelites respectively stationed at this time?
2. What reason did the Philistines give for their objection to David and his men accompanying them?
3. In what terms did Achish address David when desiring him to return?
4. State what you know of Jezreel.
5. Explain the allusions—
 - (i.) What do these Hebrews here?
 - (ii.) But what have I done . . . that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king?

CHAPTER XXX.

ANALYSIS.

In David's absence Ziklag is plundered by the Amalekites. They are pursued by David and his men. The rout of the Amalekites and the division of the spoil. David is thus able to send presents to all the cities in which he had received kindness.

NOTES.

V. 1. "Amalekites." "Ziklag."—See chapters xv., xxvii.

V. 6. "For the people spake of stoning him."—Because he had not left a force to guard the place during his absence.

V. 7. "David said to Abiathar."—A proof that he remained with David since he joined him at Keilah.

V. 9. "The brook Besor" (= *good tidings*).—Supposed to be the same as the **Wady Sheriah**, which enters the Mediterranean a few miles south of Gaza.

V. 13. "Three days ago," *i.e.*, ago.—"**Agone**" being the past participle of an obsolete verb, "**Agon**" (= *to go away*).

V. 14. "The Cherethites."—These were a kindred tribe to the Philistines. In this passage they are obviously used as synonymous with Philistines. They dwelt on the southern border of Philistia. Some connect the name with Crete. We have mention of Cherethites and Pelethites as the life-guards of David (2 Sam. vii., 18). And it has been conjectured that Pelethites is only another form of the word Philistines.

V. 27. "Bethel" (= *house of God*).—Not the famous Bethel in the tribe of Benjamin, but a place near Beersheba, called also **Bethul** or **Bethuel**. See Josh. xv., xix.

V. 27. "South Ramoth" (= *lofty places*).—Rather, "**Ramoth of the south country**." It would be so called to distinguish it from Ramoth-Gilead. It was one of the Simeonite cities, and perhaps the same as Ramath-lehi (Judges xv., 17).

"Jattir."—This was situated in the mountains of Judah (Joshua xv., 48), and was one of the Priests' cities (Joshua xxi., 14). It was probably the same as "**Attir**," ten miles south of Hebron, and may have been the native place of David's heroes, Ira and Gareb, the Ithrites (2 Sam. xxiii., 38).

V. 28. "Aroer" (= *heath*).—This was obviously **not Aroer on the river Arnon**. Its exact site is not known, but some place it about eleven miles W.S.W. of Beersheba.

"Siphmoth."—Not elsewhere mentioned. But "**Zabdi the Shiphmite**," the steward of David's wine-cellars (1 Chronicles xxvii., 27) was evidently a native of the place.

“**Eshtemoa**” (= *obedience*?).—Situated in the mountains of Judah and one of the priests’ cities (Joshua xv., 50; xxi., 14). The name is preserved in the village **Semuah**, nine miles south-south-west of Hebron.

V. 29. “Rachal” (= *traffic*).—Nothing certain known about this place. The Septuagint reads “**Carmel**.”

“**Jerahmeelites and Kenites**.”—See chaps. xv., xxvii.

V. 30. “Hormah” (= *devoted to God, utter destruction*).—Its ancient name was **Zephath**, and it was situated in the territory of Simeon (Joshua xix., 4).

“**Chorashan**” (= *smoking furnace*).—Another Simeonite city. It was the same as **Ashan** (Joshua xv., 42; xix., 7.)

“**Athach**.”—Probably in the territory of Simeon.

V. 31. “Hebron” (= *association*).—One of the most ancient cities in the world, situated on an eminence twenty miles south of Jerusalem, and twenty north of Beersheba. It was the inheritance of Caleb, and one of the Cities of Refuge on the west of Jordan. It also became the capital of David’s kingdom during the first seven and a half years of his reign. Its ancient name was Kirjath-Arba and its modern name is El-Khulil (= *the friend*).

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. What happened at Ziklag during David’s absence?
2. What was the general feeling of the people towards David at this time?
3. What course did David immediately take?
4. Who was the High-priest present with him?
5. What happened at the brook Besor?
6. How did David get information with regard to the whereabouts of the Amalekites who had just plundered Ziklag?
7. What was the result of this encounter with the Amalekites?

8. For what reason did some of David's men object to a general division of the spoil? Quote David's answer.
9. Name the towns to which David sent presents on this occasion.
10. What do you know of Hebron?
11. Explain the allusion—
 - (i.) And he answered him, Pursue:
 - (ii.) To whom longest thou? And whence art thou?
 - (iii.) They shall part alike.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ANALYSIS.

The Israelites and Philistines join battle; the Israelites are defeated; the three sons of Saul are slain, and he himself falls on his sword. By night the Jabesh-Gileadites recover the bodies, and they bury them at Jabesh.

NOTES.

The narrative of this chapter is found in 1 Chron. x., 1-12, and with only few verbal alterations.

V. 5. "His armour-bearer."—It is an established tradition among the Jews that this armour-bearer of Saul, who perished with him, was no other than Doeg, the Edomite.

V. 10. "The house of Ashtaroth."—See chap vii., 3. This was probably the ancient and famous temple of Venus which was in Askelon.

"Bethshan" (= *place of security*) or **Bethshean**, now called **Beisan**, lay in the Jordan Valley, about 12 miles south of the Sea of Galilee, and four miles west of the Jordan. It was a fortified town of the Canaanites, and was

in the territory of Issachar, but never fell to the possession of the Israelites.

V. 11. "Jabesh-Gilead," *i.e.*, Jabesh (= *dry*) of Gilead, was on the east of Jordan. (See chap. xi.)

V. 13. "Buried them under a tree at Jabesh."—Rather "**under the tamarisk,**" some well-known tree at Jabesh. David afterwards removed the bones to the family sepulchre at Zelah (2 Sam. xxi., 12-14).

The plain of Esdraelon has been justly called the great battlefield of Palestine. For notice the famous battles fought in or near it:

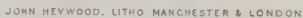
- (i.) The "Battle of Kishon," when Sisera was defeated by Deborah and Barak (Judges-iv., 15 ; v., 21).
- (ii.) Gideon and his three hundred men defeat the Midianites (Judges vii.).
- (iii.) The "Battle of Gilboa," between Saul and the Philistines, recorded here.
- (iv.) The "Battle of Megiddo," between the King of Assyria and Pharaoh Necho, King of Egypt. Josiah, King of Israel, joined the King of Assyria, and lost his life (2 Chron. xxxv., 22-24).

EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

1. Name Saul's sons who fell in the Battle of Mount Gilboa.
2. How did Saul himself meet his death ?
3. Describe the treatment which Saul's dead body received at the hands of the Philistines.
4. What reason had the Jabesh-Gileadites for acting so respectfully to Saul after his death ?
5. Where is Bethshan and Jabesh-Gilead ?
6. If Jewish tradition can be trusted, who would be the armour bearer who perished with Saul at this time ?
7. Compare the account in this chapter with that given in the Chronicles.
8. Explain the allusion—

"Lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through."

0 10 20 30 40



The student ought to make himself well acquainted with the map of Palestine, by carefully filling up several outline maps and marking the position of the following places, &c., mentioned in the "First Book of Samuel." A "note of interrogation" is added after those places whose exact position is rather uncertain:—

PLACES.

WEST OF THE RIVER JORDAN.

In the territory of Simeon—	Aroer, Beersheba, Bethel, Hormah, Ramoth, Ziklag?
„ „	Judah—Adullam, Aphek, Bethlehem, Bethshemesh, Carmel, Engedi, Ephesdammin, Eshtemoa, Hareth, Hebron, Jezreel, Keilah, Kirjath-jearim, Maon, Shaaraim, Shochoh, Telaim, Ziph.
„ „	Benjamin—Bethaven, Bethel, Gebah, Gibeah, Gilgal, Jerusalem, Michmash, Migron, Mizpah, Nob, Ophrah, Zelzah.
„ „	Ephraim—Beth-horon, Ramah, Shiloh.
„ „	Manasseh—Abel-meholah.
„ „	Issachar—Aphek, Bethshan, Bezek, Endor, Jezreel, Shunem.
„ „	Naphtali—Hazor.
„ „	Dan (S.)—Bethcar.

EAST OF THE RIVER JORDAN.

In the territory of Manasseh—Jabesh-Gilead.

THE LORDSHIPS OF THE PHILISTINES.

Ashdod (Azotus of the New Testament), Ashkelon, Ekron, Gaza, Gath.

Age ag
 Ashdod Ashkelon
 Ekron Gaza
 Gath

MOUNTAINS AND VALLEYS.

Mount Ephraim, Hill of Hachilah, Mount Gilboa, Valley of Elah,
Passage of Michmash.

RIVERS.

The brook Besor, Jordan, and Kishon.

CAVES.

Adullam and Engedi.

NOTEWORTHY CHARACTERS.

1. In the time of Eli—Hophni, Phinehas, Hannah, Samuel.
2. „ Samuel—(Joel, Abiah) Saul, David.
3. „ Saul—Jonathan, David, Abner, Doeg, Ahiah, Michal
(Saul's daughter), Joab, Abishai, Abiathar,
Abigail, Achish. *King of G.*

CHIEF EVENTS OF SAUL'S REIGN.

1. The destruction of a Philistine garrison by Jonathan, which led
to a Philistine invasion (chap. xiii.).
2. The Battle of Michmash (chap. xiv.).
3. The destruction of the Amalekites—Agag being saved (chap. xv.).
4. Defeat of the Philistines near Shochoh, when David slew Goliath
(chap. xvii.).
5. Saul's persecution of David (chapters xviii., etc.)
6. The Battle of Mount Gilboa (chap. xxxi.).

EVENTS OF DAVID'S EARLY LIFE.

1. His anointment by Samuel at Bethlehem (chap. xvi.).
2. He is appointed Saul's harpist and armour-bearer (chap. xvi.).
3. His combat with Goliath (chap. xvii.).
4. Jonathan's love and Saul's jealousy.
5. His marriage with Michal, though he had won Merab (chap. xviii.).
6. His covenant with Jonathan (chap. xx.).

7. Ahimelech gives him some of the shewbread, and also Goliath's sword, when he was on his way to Achish, King of Gath (chap. xxi.). - *message fr.*
8. His life in the cave of Adullam. The rescue of Keilah (chap. xxiii.).
9. His flight to the wilderness of Ziph, and of Maon, &c., pursued by Saul. *last int. par.*
10. His connection with Nabal, and marriage with Abigail, Nabal's widow (chap. xxv.).
11. His life at Ziklag (chap. xxvii.). *Saul's - Achish*
12. He defeated the Amalekites, who during his absence had plundered Ziklag (chap. xxx.).
13. He put to death the messenger who brought news to him of Saul's death (chap. xxxi.).

ARRANGEMENT OF THE CHIEF DATES.

As the date of several events in 1 Samuel are doubtful, the following table can but be conjectural. The balance of opinion is certainly in favour of taking 1055 B.C. as the date of David's accession.

	B.C.
Samuel's Birth	1149
The Call of Samuel when 12 years old	1137
Death of Eli	1127 ?
Philistine oppression (1 Samuel vii., 1).....	1127-1107
Samuel's judgeship	1107-1089 ?
Samuel's sons ruled	1089-1079 ?
Saul elected King	1079
David anointed by Samuel	1065
Samuel's death	1059 ?
Saul's death and David's accession.....	1055

GENERAL QUESTIONS.

(The student ought to consider the answers to these questions carefully, after he has read through the book.)

1. In what terms does St. Paul refer to the period included in the Books of Judges and Samuel? Explain the chronological difficulty involved in the statement.
2. How does the administration of Samuel differ from those before and after it?
3. Give the particulars of the friendship of David and Jonathan.
4. Distinguish between the office of priest and prophet. Illustrate your answer from 1 Samuel.
5. Compare the characters of Saul and David.
6. What are the dates of the birth of Samuel and the accession of David?
7. In what respects may Samuel be considered as a type of Christ? Mention any prediction of the Messiah you can remember in the First Book of Samuel.
8. What circumstances led to the choice of Saul as king over Israel? Why was he afterwards rejected of God?
9. To what branch of Aaron's descendants was the High-priesthood limited? Did it always continue in this branch? If not, what were the exceptions?
10. Mention the vows recorded in 1 Samuel, and give parallels in profane history.
11. "Have ye not read what David did when he was an hungered?" Matt. xii., 3. Explain the allusion in this passage.
12. Draw a genealogical table showing the connection between Abner, Jonathan, and David.
13. With what events of the period under consideration is Gilgal connected?
14. Define on a map the position of Jabesh-Gilead, Shiloh, Endor, and Ashdod. How are they connected with the history of this period?

15. Mention a passage in 1 Samuel, where the word Elohim is supposed to stand for something else than God Himself. Examine the passage.
16. Compare the detailed account of Saul's declension and disobedience given in 1 Samuel with the brief summary of that declension and disobedience given in 1 Chronicles.
17. "Neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets." State the different ways in which God made known His will to man both before and under the Law. Give examples of each mode.
18. By whom, on what occasions, and with what meanings were the following words spoken ?
 - (i.) The spirit of God came upon him and he prophesied among them.
 - (ii.) The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent.
 - (iii.) But there is hallowed bread.
 - (iv.) To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

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